

Promotion of Research Partnerships between Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences and Developing and Transition Countries

Call for Proposals and Guidelines for the Submission of Co-financing Requests and Stages of the Assessment Procedure

Notice: all projects have to be completed by mid 2013

1. Introduction

The program supports universities of applied sciences (UAS) and universities of teacher education (UTE)¹ working in cooperation with developing and transition countries on projects involving applied research and development. For this purpose a UAS/UTE submitting a request cooperates with a competent institution in the partner country which has an interest in a mutual transfer of know-how and a research partnership with a Swiss UAS/UTE and is willing to make a contribution towards this end.

The program is committed to solidarity with developing and transition countries and promotes international opening and cooperation with partners of the Swiss UAS/UTE worldwide.

2. Objective

The following goals of the program are binding for the co-financing of submitted projects:

Specific objectives:

- Realization of application-oriented research and development (aR&D) on development-relevant subjects (see also the Millennium Development Goals declaration of the United Nations) by Swiss UAS/UTE in cooperation with partner institutions in development and transition (D&T) countries (universities, colleges, research institutions).
- Building and expansion of knowledge of research capacities on the institutional and individual level at partner institutions and UAS/UTE.
- Knowledge transfer between the participating institutions in connection with the aR&D-project.

The three objectives are basically valid for each project. The realization of aR&D related to development-relevant subjects forms the core of the program and, hence, a focal point in assessing co-financing requests (cf. chapter 6, Selection Criteria of Co-Financing Requests).

In addition, the following **principles** are important to achieving the stated objectives.

- Scientific knowledge transfer should be designed to achieve an exchange of knowledge in the sense of "mutual learning for change."
- Building of competences is oriented both towards expertise and methodology as well as abilities concerning intercultural cooperation and sustainability in a broad sense.

¹ The SDC programme is open for all member-UAS of Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (KFH) and for member-UTE of the Swiss Conference of Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education (COHEP).

3. Projects and Activities

From the very outset, research projects are oriented towards long-term cooperation between the participating partners. Hence, they may be subdivided into several project phases.

The program supports the following types of research projects:

R1) Preliminary projects should be based on a relevant idea worthy of assessment but with uncertainties remaining in regard to capacity and/or the selection of partner institutions. In a preliminary phase the “assessment” (i.e. scrutinizing the partner institutions and deciding about the form of cooperation) is a priority, while at the same time the respective research project is getting prepared.

R2) Research projects which

- were realized in the context of a preliminary project, and/or
- are defined on the basis of an existing or newly established cooperation between a UAS/UTE and a partner institution, or
- are the continuation of an on-going research project.

The acceptance of a R1 project does not automatically lead to the acceptance of a R2 project.

Activities which are supported through such projects are, for example:

- Implementation of research projects in aR&D realized in partnership on development relevant subjects
- Partial research in the context of a larger development or research project
- Field trials in the partner country realized by cooperating partners

4. Partners

The agents are, for one, researchers at Swiss universities of applied sciences (or at schools or in departments), at universities of teacher education and, for another, researchers at colleges, universities or other research institutions in D&T countries.

At the time of handing in the co-financing request, the partner must already be identified and his cooperation in the project must have been confirmed.

The program supports research projects with partners in D&T countries in compliance with the DAC definition (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist>).

5. Principles of cooperation

The 11 principles for research partnerships, developed by the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries, should be followed by those submitting requests taking into account the specific context (cf. www.kfpe.ch/key_activities/publications/guidelines.php). In summary, they are:

1. Decide on the objectives together
2. Build up mutual trust
3. Share information; develop networks
4. Share responsibility
5. Create transparency
6. Monitor and evaluate the collaboration
7. Disseminate the results
8. Apply the results
9. Share profits equitably
10. Increase research capacity
11. Build on the achievements

6. Selection criteria for co-financing requests

The substantive and formal criteria for the selection of submitted co-financing requests are:

Substantive criteria:

- Agreement of the submitted project with the goals and principles of the program. A project, if possible, should pursue all three objectives, i.e.
 - a) application-oriented research and development (aR&D) on development relevant subjects,
 - b) building and expansion of knowledge and research capacities and competences, and
 - c) knowledge transfer between the institutions involved in the aR&D-project.
- Relevance of the co-financing request for the partner in the D&T country and for the development of the partner country.
- Execution of application-oriented research and development². The realization of aR&D on subjects relevant to development is one of the program's focal points and is given particular weight.
- Building of knowledge and research capacities in the field of applied research in the partner organizations (individual and institutional capacity development) is another focal point of the program.
- Requests with a high degree of originality, potential (scientific, economic, social, ecological, etc.) or innovative ideas are preferred.
- Suitability for valorization of results (spread, practical application, political development).
- The current wide variety of research themes is retained. In principle the selection of research themes is determined by the options and interests of the partners in Switzerland and in the D&T countries.

Formal criteria:

- Plainly written and structured project documentation with clear descriptions of objectives and expected concrete results.
- Research plan presenting a realistic subdivision into working phases.
- A letter of intent of the Swiss institution (UAS/UTE) and of the partner organization signed by a representative with budget responsibility committing the proposed financial and scientific contribution.
- Clear budget and financial plan.
- Appropriate ratio between the co-funded means and the potential benefit of the project.

7. Budget

On the one hand, the submitted budget must comprise the overall costs of the project with a clear presentation of the individual budget items and, on the other hand, a list of the planned financial contributions broken down into:

- The UAS/UTE own contribution;
- The foreign partner's own contribution;
- Contributions from other investors;
- Requested funding from KFH-DC program (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation funds).

Activities that can be funded by the SDC financed program are:

- Costs of travel, board and lodging in Switzerland for foreign partners;
- Costs of travel, board and lodging for participants from Switzerland in partner countries;
- Fees for UAS staff in Switzerland, max. up to 50% of costs of fees and max. up to 50% of the overall contribution of the program to the approved project;
- Specific operational added costs of the partner (e.g. supplementary material);

²) **Application-oriented research:** building on basic scientific findings, problems are investigated that are relevant to production or application.
Application-oriented development: transfer of research results to application in tangible products.

- Costs for activities conceived as pilot projects (with trial character), special clarification costs for small and medium enterprises participating in the research partnership;
- Costs to cover minor risks (insurance premiums, warranties, etc.).

The contributions from other investors must not come from another project supported by SDC.

8. Financial contributions

The framework of SDC contributions to the types of projects defined in chapter 3 reads as follows:

R1) Preliminary projects: up to max. CHF 40,000, the program contribution is limited to a maximum of 50% of total costs.

R2) Research projects: up to max. CHF 80,000, the program contribution is limited to a maximum of 50% of total costs.

Total costs = expense UAS/UTE + expense D&T partner = 100%

Financing = UAS/UTE own funds UAS/UTE
 + D&T partner own funds+ any funds from other parties (= min. of total costs)
 + contribution from SDC program (= max. 50% of total costs)

9. Format of the co-financing request

The request has to be made in two steps (see detailed procedure below). The project-outline (draft) should not exceed four pages A4 (no annexes admitted), the full project application should not exceed eight A4 pages (not including: budget, literature, letter of commitment, cover-sheet with title, authors and institutions). The submission must be done on-line following the instruction of chapter 11 (see below). Project outline and full project application must be written in English.

10. Advice for working out co-financing requests

The UAS/UTE developing a co-financing request can apply for support regarding:

- Advice on the formal aspects of drafting a co-financing request and aspects of development cooperation;
- Advice related to cooperation with / inclusion of universities and partners in D&T countries.

This advice is provided by the KFH-DC Coordination Office.

11. Selection and approval procedure

The criteria guiding the approval procedure for project requests are:

- Assurance of the substantive and methodological quality of the projects;
- Expedient harmonization of time schedule and the requirements of the projects;
- Best possible independence of the approval committee;
- Expense (of applicant and approval committee) for working out the request and for the approval procedure is reasonably proportional to the funds approved.

Based on these criteria, the resulting principles for the approval procedure are:

- Requests can be submitted by all Swiss universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education.
- The committee reviews the requests by category (R1 or R2) and by comparison, however, the selection criteria (cf. chapter 6) for the two categories can be weighed in different ways.
- There is no possibility of appeal for requests that were definitely rejected.

The individual steps of the approval procedure and project implementation are:

- a) The co-financing request must be written in consideration of the criteria presented in the above chapters and must be submitted using the web site <http://kfh-dc.supsi.ch> in two steps:
- First step: submission of project outline (draft). The contents of the project outline are reported at the end of the present document.
 - Second step (only if project request approved): submission of the full project application (full proposal) by the CfP deadline.
- b) The coordination office reviews the requests for completeness and the adherence to the formal instructions.
- c) The KFH-DC research committee evaluates the project outlines and selects those to be invited for submission of a full project application. Full projects have to be uploaded as a single *pdf* file containing all requested documents and will be peer reviewed by 2 experts within two weeks after the submission deadline. Experts will send the relative evaluations as recommendations to the KFH-DC coordination office. The experts pool consists of:
- five UAS/UTE representatives, and
 - five external experts.
- d) The recommendations of the experts will then be presented to the KFH-DC research committee, which will elaborate an evaluation proposal to the attention of the steering committee. The KFH-DC research committee consists of:
- the deputy secretary general of the KFH (Head),
 - the representative of SDC,
 - two delegates of KFH-DC steering committee, and
 - the head of KFH-DC coordination office as non voting participant.
- e) This evaluation proposal will then be finally evaluated by the KFH-DC steering committee, which takes the final decision of the approved/rejected projects.
- f) The head KFH-DC coordination office informs the applicant, the relevant UAS/UTE and SDC about the decisions. If a request is approved, the KFH-DC steering committee issues an agreement, which is signed by the UAS/UTE and the project manager. Subsequently, the project manager presents the KFH-DC steering committee a bill for 50% of the amount approved.
- g) After completion of the project, the project management issues a final report compliant with the document 'Instructions for reporting' and a final statement, incl. vouchers covering the total costs of the project and sends it to the KFH-DC coordination office. The financial statement contains a special documentation of the cost contributions by all co-financing partners.
- h) The project management submits to the KFH-DC coordination office a single-page final report in English language to replace the summary on the websites mentioned above. Inclusion of a few relevant photographs is suggested.
- i) After the approval of the final report and the financial statement and after receipt of the final report in English language, due remaining funds are paid.
- j) The payment arrangements are:
- 90 % at the beginning of the project,
 - 10 % after receipt of the final report and the final financial statement.

12. Deadlines

The deadlines for submission of projects' requests are given by the KFH-DC coordination office.

Project outline (draft).

The project outline must be submitted using the web site <http://kfh-dc.supsi.ch>. The contents include following points.

Project title	Insert title, clearly indicating the nature of the project and the partner country
Project location	City, region, country
Short project description	Describe the intended project
Applicant Institution	Insert Name of Institution, Address, phone, fax, web address
Contact person	First and last name of applicant, e-mail Only 1 person
Partner organization	Insert Name of Institution, Address, phone, fax, web address
Contact person	First and last name of applicant, e-mail Only 1 person
Reason for the request	Describe the reason for the request
Classification	R1) Preliminary phase R2) Research project
Thematic focus	
Main goals/Expected results	
Methodology	
Importance of request for applicant institution	Indicate relevance for the applicant institution
Importance of request for partner organization	Indicate the importance for the partner organization
Development relevance	Indicate the relevance in terms of Millennium Development Goals (UN declaration)
Research relevance	Indicate the relevance for research for the country
Sustainability	Indicate aspects of sustainability
Feed-back in teaching activities	Indicate possible feed-back in teaching activities of both the main applicant and the partner
Duration of Project	Indicate the duration of the project in months
Total costs of Project	Indicate total cost in CHF and financing, subdividing contribution from the applicant institution, from the partner organization and from third parties. Details on travel, salary, consumables, etc. Indicate the percentage invested in the partner country
Requested co-financing	Indicate the requested co-financing from the KFH-DC program