

Spark funding instrument

Requirements for the project description

The project description is the basis for the evaluation of the Spark project applications. It is the only document that is provided to the members of the international pool of researchers designated for the evaluation of a particular proposal.¹

It will serve as a basis for assessing the projects based on the relevant criteria for the award of Spark grants, i.e.:

- a. Originality/novelty of the idea
- b. Scientific quality of the project
- c. Potential impact (scientific, societal, economic, cultural,...)
- d. Unconventionality

The project description must consist of original text that has been written by the applicant her-/himself and must be written in **English**.

The project description must be **completely anonymous**, i.e. the document should be written in such a way that the evaluators cannot guess the identity, the position or the institute of the applicants. Particular attention must be paid if referring to own publications: While applicants are allowed to cite their own work, it is strictly forbidden to hint or to point out that it is their own work.

The project description must **not exceed 5 pages and 20,000 characters (with spaces)**; this includes the footnotes, illustrations, formulae, tables (and, if applicable, the table of contents), but not the bibliography. In addition, a maximum of 1 page of summary can be written. A minimum of **point 10 font size and 1.5 line spacing** must be used. The project description should not contain any annexed documents.

The SNSF does not consider applications that do not meet the formal requirements and/or are manifestly inadequate.

The project description needs to be structured as follows:

1. Summary (max 1 page);
2. Research plan
 - 2.1 Current state of research in the field (including: previous insights which provided the starting point and basis for the planned study, and how the described approach differs from existing initiatives in Switzerland and abroad);

¹ Spark applications are evaluated with a double-blind process. CV, track-record or identity of the applicants will not be provided to the evaluators.

- 2.2 Project description with goals, methodology, approach and expected outcomes, including the role of the team members if applicable;
 - 2.3 Risks and gains of the research project, incl. potential impact on the research field;
 - 2.4 Short budget description. In case you are asking for a salary, please do not precise if it is you own salary or the salary of an employee for anonymity reasons. Please note that the budget you fill in in the mySNF form will not be sent to the evaluators.
3. Bibliography (not included in the maximum number of pages).