

Bilateral research collaboration with Asia 2021-2024

2022 Call for Innovation Partnership Grants with East and Southeast Asia

Background

In 2020 the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) renewed the Leading House (LH) mandate to ETH Zurich for bilateral collaboration with partner institutions in Asia. In the current phase 2021 - 2024, one single bilateral programme covers the entire East and Southeast Asia region. All activities and instruments in this phase build strongly on the activities, outcomes and experiences from the previous phases. An additional important element for this phase of the bilateral programme is fostering innovation and the application of research results to economy and society.

Goals and objectives

'Innovation partnership grants' support the establishment of cooperation between Swiss researchers from universities, universities of applied sciences, universities of teacher education, or public research institutes with non-academic innovation agents in China, Japan, South Korea and member states of ASEAN¹ (hereafter called partner countries). Agents in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are also eligible. These agents can be corporates, SMEs or start-ups, innovation parks or similar entities with a focus on applied sciences or technical development. The **goal of the innovation partnership grants** is to initiate long-term partnerships with mutually beneficial concrete outcomes. The project proposal must specify the expected outcomes and how they will be achieved.

Specifically, innovation partnership grants can support activities such as:

- planning a joint R&D project proposal for submission to a national or international innovation-related funding agency (e.g. Innosuisse)²
- establishing long-term consulting or training partnerships between two institutions (e.g. management training for an Asian innovation agent conducted by a Swiss university of applied sciences)
- pilot technology or product development activities (e.g. creation of a prototype integrating Swiss knowledge)
- reverse engineering projects (e.g. extraction of knowledge from Asia for educational purposes)

The applicants have to explain how the project can generate benefits for Switzerland and the partner country in the long run. Projects must go beyond one-way transfer of knowledge.

Innovation partnerships can have a duration of up to one year. The grants do not cover research projects, salaries of doctoral students or exchange of young researchers. For these activities, please refer to the bridging grants or mobility instruments of the same bilateral programme.

Eligibility

The call is open to **all scientific disciplines and fields of research**.

¹ ASEAN member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.

²Specify the call and funding agency.

Professors, senior scientists and postdoctoral researchers of Swiss federal and cantonal universities, universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education, as well as public research institutes, are eligible to apply. The Switzerland-based scientist is the main applicant.

Non-academic innovation agent partners must be senior staff affiliated with a company, start-up, hospital, innovation park or similar agency in one of the partner countries. Universities from the partner country can participate as third parties.

Partnership

The mutual commitment of the partners in both countries will serve as an indicator for the strength of the partnership. This includes commitment of funds and in-kind resources by all partners. The KFPE Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships³ shall be used as a guideline for the project process.

Funding and Budgeting

The maximum amount for an innovation partnership grant is **20 kCHF**. The grant will be disbursed in two instalments: 80% after signing the grant contract and 20% after approval of the final report. A detailed budget must be provided in the project proposal. Budgeted expenses must be justified and related to the proposed activities. A financial contribution of each partner is expected and must be made explicit in cash and in-kind. Industry partners must cover their own cost.

Application

The main applicant must be employed at one of the above-mentioned Swiss institutions. Applications shall be submitted **in electronic format as one single pdf document** on the 'Innovation Partnership Grants 2022' [online application form](#).

Timeline

Call launch:	17 May 2022
Deadline for submission:	31 July 2022
Evaluation and funding decision:	August-September 2022
Notification:	September 2022
Project start:	November 2022
Project duration:	Up to 12 months

Evaluation and selection

Applications will be assessed by an evaluation panel. The evaluation is based on the following criteria:

- Innovation potential
- Technological merit of the anticipated outcomes
- Feasibility and originality of the proposed activity
- Potential for long-term collaboration and follow-up activities
- Expertise and complementarities of the partner institutions and the applicants
- Contributions by all involved partners, including funding and in-kind contributions
- Potential economic benefits

³ https://naturalsciences.ch/organisations/kfpe/11_principles_7_questions/9505-a-guide-for-transboundary-research-partnerships-2nd-edition---2014-

- Promotion of young and female researchers

Reporting

The Swiss main applicant is responsible for managing the funds and reporting. He or she must submit a final technical and financial report one month after the termination of the innovation project.

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