



3RCC Funding Regulations – 3Rs Project Grants

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1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

- a. 3Rs Project Grants are ambitious and innovative 3Rs research projects based of high scientific quality and 3Rs impact. Projects are multi year and are selected through the process of a call for proposals under specific remits.

1.2 Definitions

Funding Call	An official announcement to submit proposals for financial support. Calls will be of a specific nature depending on the strategic aim of the funding provided.
Grant Review Panel	A panel comprised of internationally recognized 3R experts who advise the 3RCC on research funding. They have an advisory function and no voting rights. The GRP is composed members of the 3RCC Scientific Advisory Board but may also include additional panel members selected for each specific round.
Node Coordinator	Members of the 3RCC Executive Board who are animal welfare officers and/or 3Rs experts at member universities (Nodes) and member organisations. They are in direct contact with students and researchers at the universities and are responsible for implementing the Centre's strategy at the node level.
Host Institution	A recognised nonprofit research institution based in Switzerland. Recognized research institutions are the public Swiss universities, Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology, Swiss universities of applied sciences and university (associated) hospitals and non-commercial research centres outside the higher education sector.

1.3 Aim

- a. The 3RCC funds research grants for innovative 3Rs research projects of high scientific quality and 3Rs impact in Switzerland. Projects should:
 - i. Address existing gaps in 3Rs knowledge or methodology
 - ii. Promote the development, optimisation and/or implementation of methods for the purpose of advancing the 3Rs and

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- iii. Aim to have a significant impact on the development of 3Rs research

1.4 Duration

- a. The maximum duration of funding is 48 months.

1.5 Maximum funding

- a. The maximum funding for a Research Grant is prescribed in the specific funding round.

1.6 Research proposals involving animals

- a. For research proposals that cannot achieve their research aims without the use of experimental animals, the applicant should:
 - i. Follow the Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Experiments on Animals from the SAS (Swiss Academy of Sciences) and the SAMS (Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences).
 - ii. Use best practice guidelines, such as pre-registration, PREPARE, or Animal Research: Reporting of *In Vivo* Experiments (ARRIVE).
- b. The formal ethical approval of animal experimentation licenses does not lie with the 3RCC's Grant Review Panel, but with the competent bodies of authority (e.g. the cantonal veterinary office).

1.7 Frequency

- a. Call frequency is determined within the four-year strategic plan and can be adjusted depending on funds available.

1.8 Project results

- a. Intellectual property
 - i. Knowledge and skills acquired during the Project remain with the Grant Recipient and Home Institution.
 - ii. No intellectual property rights are transferred to the 3RCC through the Knowledge Transfer Grant.
 - iii. It is the responsibility of the Home Institution and the Grant Recipient to agree on the allocation of intellectual property created using knowledge acquired at the Home Institution
- b. Financial benefits
 - i. The Project results must not create any direct financial benefits during the Project for any involved parties.
- c. Rights to Project results
 - i. The rights to results gained during research work funded by the 3RCC are owned by the Grant Recipient and/or the Host Institution in accordance with the policy of the Host Institution.

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2 Eligibility

2.1 Requirements for the research proposal

- a. Requirements for grant applications are defined in the remits of the individual Funding Calls.

2.2 Lead Applicant and Co-applicants – 3Rs Project Grants

- a. Applicants must be natural persons eligible to autonomously conduct a scientific research activity at a Host Institution.

2.3 Eligible Costs – 3Rs Project Grants

- a. The following costs are considered eligible:
 - i. Salaries of employees engaged for the Project within the scope of the salary ranges of the Host Institution.
 - ii. Costs of project-related services by third parties in the domain of research.
 - iii. Costs of the use of project-related equipment.
 - iv. Asset/equipment purchases under CHF 20'000.- per item, unless specifically given exemption with extraordinary justification during the application process.
 - v. Consumables directly used in the scope of the Project.
 - vi. Animal costs.
 - vii. Expenses related to travel, meetings and communication of the results.
 - viii. ~~Publications in compliance with an open access policy.~~
- b. Goods or services should be obtained from Swiss-providers whenever possible

2.4 Ineligible costs – 3Rs Project Grants

- a. The following costs are ineligible and expected to be contributed by the Host Institute:
 - i. Infrastructure.
 - ii. Overhead costs related to the project.
 - iii. Administration of Funds.
 - iv. Publication costs

2.5 Joint Applications – 3Rs Project Grants

- a. Only one Lead Applicant is permitted.
- b. If funded, the resulting project may have co-Principal Investigators.
- c. Co- applicants are encouraged and must be listed.

2.6 Collaboration with commercial research organisations

- a. Research conducted for directly commercial purposes will not be funded.
- b. For-profit/private/industrial partners are allowed as collaborators on the Project along with an eligible applicant and Host Institution as described in these Regulations.

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- c. Applicants who wish to conduct the planned research in collaboration with a commercially oriented institution must be able to prove to the 3RCC that the principles of research freedom, research independence and freedom to publish will be upheld.
- d. Sponsors and owners of commercial research organisations outside the higher education sector may not derive any direct financial benefit from their involvement in the funded research work.
- e. The collaborations with commercially oriented institutions must be at the same level as, or higher than, research conducted in facilities at the Host Institution.

2.7 Overlapping Grant funding periods

- a. If the lead applicant is a Principal Investigator on a Project or Doctorate Grant from the 3RCC, the application will only be considered if there is no overlapping funding period between the funded grant and proposed Project.
- b. Concurrent applications to different 3RCC funding schemes as the lead applicant are permitted. However, if multiple applications are successful, the lead applicant may only accept funding from one scheme and must withdraw from the other(s).

2.8 Number of applications

- a. Applicants may submit only one application per Project Grant funding call as Lead Applicant.
- b. There is no limit to the number of applications a person can be listed as a co-applicant, including applications in the same call.

3 Application

3.1 Language

- a. The language for all correspondence with the 3RCC is English.

3.2 Process - 3Rs Project Grants

- a. A grant application to the 3RCC is a two-step process:
 - i. Applicants will initially complete an outline application providing an overview of the research proposal
 - ii. If successful, applicants will be invited to submit a full application
- b. The 3Rs Node Coordinator – 3RCC’s representative at the Higher Education Institution – can support applicants in this process.

3.3 Document submission

- a. All application documents are submitted via the 3RCC funding portal.

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3.4 Conflict of Interest

- a. The 3RCC expects all applicants to comply with good practice aimed at preventing conflicts of interests in scientific research, for example where the people involved (researchers, collaborators, or stakeholders) have relationships or interests that could affect the integrity of the research or could stand to financially profit from the research.

3.5 Contributions by the Host Institute

- a. A "Letter of Support" from the Host Institution is required when submitting the Full Application to ensure that the Project would have institutional support and be provided for in accordance with clause 2.4 of these regulations.

3.6 Resubmission

- a. Resubmissions of applications are permitted provided that significant modifications have been made compared to the previous application which reflect the changing external conditions and/or improvements to the application in line with provided feedback from the original reviews. The applicant must acknowledge that the application is a resubmission and describe the changes made from the previous submission in an attached cover letter at the Outline Application stage.

4 Assessment

4.1 Criteria for award and evaluation

- a. The quality of the grant application is evaluated according to the following criteria

i. Scientific Quality

- Innovation and new perspectives for the 3Rs in the proposed approach.
- Whether it adds significant value to current scientific understanding.
- Interdisciplinary Relevance, applicability and value.

ii. Impact on the 3Rs (Replace, Reduce, Refine)

- Clear integration of, and motivation to further the 3Rs Principle.
- Demonstration of measurable replacement or reduction of animal use, and/or animal welfare improvements.
- Potential for adoption and broader application by other labs or research groups.

iii. Feasibility

- Flexibility and risk management of the Project to ensure successful completion of key milestones.
- Assessment of the collaborations and partnerships necessary to project success.

iv. Other criteria

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- Clear plan for communicating the research outcomes to non-specialist audiences and stakeholders.
 - Commitment to sharing data and results transparently with Open Access
- b. Additional criteria may apply as specified in Funding Calls.

4.2 Review process – outline applications

- a. Outline applications are assessed for validity by the 3RCC.
- b. The application is assessed by at least two members of the Grant Review Panel based on the specific remits of the Funding Call.
- c. The entire Grant Review Panel convenes and rank all outline applications based on the criteria.
- d. Selected applicants are invited to complete a full application. The number of outline applications that are invited to the next stage is dependent on the quality of the applications, as well as the probability of success.

4.3 Review process – full funding applications

- a. Full funding applications are checked for validity and completeness by the 3RCC.
- b. The proposal is independently reviewed by at least two external, international experts.
- c. The research proposal is individually assessed by three members of the Grant Review Panel, taking into consideration the external reviews.
- d. The individual assessment of the Grant Review Panel forms the preliminary ranking of the proposals.
- e. The final ranking of all research proposals is set in the Grant Review Panel meeting. The highest-ranking research proposals that can be accommodated within the budget for the Funding Call are recommended for funding to the Strategic Board of the 3RCC. Any special conditions of funding are described in the recommendations.
- f. The 3RCC's Strategic Board approves which proposals will be funded.

4.4 Availability of reviews

For both the Outline and Full Application processes, all applicants are provided with the written reviews from both external experts and members of the Grant Panel. The Review Summary document is complete except for the name of the reviewer; the overall score from 1-5; and confidential information.

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4.5 Right of appeal

- a. Applicants have no right to any formal appeal process regarding the decision of the Strategic Board. Feedback received will be taken into consideration for further calls.

5 Legal Framework

5.1 Governing law

- a. These Regulations are governed by the substantive laws of Switzerland.
- b. The exclusive place of jurisdiction is Bern, Switzerland.

5.2 Relationship to other documents

- a. In case of conflicts between documents, the following order of precedence applies:
 - i. The individual Grant Agreement
 - ii. The Appendices to the individual Grant Agreement
 - iii. The Implementation Regulations for Project Grants (*pending url*)
 - iv. The Funding Regulations for Project Grants (*pending url*)
 - v. The specific terms of the funding call.

5.3 Language

- a. The authoritative language for all regulations and agreements is English.
- b. In case of discrepancies between language versions, the English version prevails.

5.4 Amendments

- a. The 3RCC may amend these Funding Regulations at any time.
- b. Amendments apply to:
 - i. All new grants awarded after the effective date of the amendment
 - ii. Existing grants, where the changes do not materially disadvantage the Grant Recipient or the Host Institution.
- c. The Grant Recipient and Host Institution will be notified of any amendments affecting existing grants.

5.5 Severability

- a. If any provision of these regulations is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions remain in full force and effect.
- b. Invalid provisions will be replaced with valid provisions that most closely achieve the intended purpose.



5.6 Data protection

- a. Personal data collected in connection with these Grants is processed in accordance with Swiss data protection laws.
- b. Data is used solely for purposes of grant administration and evaluation.
- c. The Grant Recipient has the right to access and correct their personal data held by the 3RCC.

5.7 Effective date

- a. These Funding Regulations enter into force on the 12th of December 2025.
- b. They apply to all Project Grants awarded on or after the effective date.
- c. Grants awarded before the effective date remain governed by the regulations in force at the time of award, unless otherwise specified.