



Research Program Energy-Economy-Society (EWG) Call 2021-2022 for Research Proposals

The Energy – Economy – Society (EES) research programme promotes application-oriented research in the field of energy policy. To this end the EES focuses on economic, social, psychological and political issues throughout the energy sector supply chain. EES elaborates calls to fund innovative socio-economic research projects that address relevant energy-policy questions for Switzerland. In line with the [Federal Energy Research Masterplan](#) for the period from 2021 to 2024 and with the ["Energy research concept of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy"](#), EES defines research priorities through its calls.

For this call, the [Directive on the submission and evaluation of applications for financial support of energy research, pilot and demonstration projects](#) applies.

Scope

In 2022, researchers are invited to submit research proposals in one of the following fields (see below). Projects can concentrate on one aspect of the fields proposed and do not have to treat all sub-points and research questions listed.

1) Sustainable finance for the energy transition

- How can sustainable finance foster the transition towards energy efficiency and renewable energy?
- How can transparency regulations for sustainability reporting in financial and non-financial institutions foster the energy transition?

2) Consumer behavior and energy demand

- What is the importance of information in energy markets, and how does it influence consumer behavior? What are the limits of transparency and the effects of information overload?
- What is an optimal combination between monetary and non-monetary incentives to implement the energy transition?
- What policies from domains outside energy have an impact on energy demand? How can these policies be better accounted for in the design of energy policies?

3) Energy transition and equity

- How can an inclusive transition be designed?
- What is the distributional impact of energy policy and how is it perceived by citizens?
- How can the clean energy transition enhance quality of life?

4) Digitalisation and the energy transition

- Market regulation and digital platforms in the energy domain: how do digital platforms have to be regulated in order to avoid market power abuse?





Aktenzeichen: BFE-226-2/2/13/1

Timeline

January 18th 2022, 12:00 CET	Deadline for questions regarding the call
February 21st 2022, 12:00 CET	Deadline for submission of pre-proposals
March/April 2022	Notification of accepted pre-proposals
May 2022	Deadline for full proposal submission
June 2022	Notification of accepted projects
August-November 2022	Launch of accepted projects

Contact Information

If you have any question regarding the call, please do not hesitate to contact:

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The deadline for questions is January 18th, 12:00 CET. Answers to questions of general interest and relevance will be published on the [EWG Website](#) on January 26th 2022.

After January 18th, only administrative questions will be answered.

No extension of the deadline will be granted.

Eligibility

The call is addressed to universities (including ETH-domain), universities of applied science, further research organizations and the private sector in Switzerland. The participation of young scientists, and particularly PhD students, in the research teams is encouraged. Researchers in the public and private sector can apply for remuneration of the personnel costs according to the maximum rates provided in the Appendix. The Energy-Economy-Society research programme does not pay any contribution to overhead cost. ¹

Proposals from working groups including specialists from different fields are welcome (the contact person should be specified). Own and third-party contributions (in-kind and/or cash) have to be indicated at the pre-proposal submission and formally confirmed at the full proposal submission.

Only projects with a focus on social science and humanities shall be considered for funding. The projects should address questions relevant for Switzerland.

Universities, universities of applied sciences, further research organisations and the private sector based outside Switzerland are welcome to apply. They however have to do so in a consortium with at least one Swiss partner and work on research questions relevant for Switzerland. The Swiss partner has to provide a substantial contribution to the research work performed in the project and be listed as the main partner in the application.

Supported projects typically receive public funding in the order of 100–300 kCHF and have a duration between 24 and 36 months.

¹ Please beware that the EWG research programme expects fully financed Professors (from the ETH domain, Universities etc) to include their work on a project as own contribution (and not ask for SFOE funding).



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Applicants must comply with the conditions set out in the [Directive on the submission and evaluation of applications for financial support of energy research, pilot and demonstration projects](#).

Application Procedure

The call follows a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure. First, a pre-proposal (max. 6 pages, see pre-proposal template) is submitted. If the pre-proposal is selected after evaluation, the applicant is invited to submit a full proposal. Invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee funding.

The projects presented in the pre-proposal and in the full proposal must be consistent. Any change to the plans described in the pre-proposal should be explained and justified.

At both stages of the application, the main project partner prepares a proposal (pre-proposal or full proposal) using the template available on the Research Program Energy-Economy-Society [website](#) in any national language or in English.

The pre-proposals have to be submitted as one single PDF file by e-mail to energieforschung@bfe.admin.ch, by February 21st 2022, 12:00 CET.

The receipt of the pre-proposal will be confirmed in due time. If you do not receive confirmation of your pre-proposal submission by February 25th 2022 please contact Anne-Kathrin Faust.

Evaluation of Proposals

The project proposals will be evaluated along the criteria listed in Appendix 2 both at the pre-proposal and the full proposal stage.



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Appendix 1 Maximum remuneration for activities carried out within the framework of SFOE energy research

Hourly rates for research projects

Category	Universities	CHF/h	Private organisations	CHF/h
	Universities of applied sciences			
A	Project manager	115	Project manager	160
	Deputy	95	Deputy	140
B	Experienced scientists with at least 5 years' experience after gaining a degree	80	Subject matter experts with at least 5 years' experience	120
C	Scientific assistants	65	Subject matter experts	100
D	Technical staff, programmers	60	Technical staff, programmers	90
E	Secretarial services	50	Secretarial services	75

A maximum of 20 % of the project time can be used for project management (including deputy, category A). A maximum of 1,400 hours per person per year may be used for scientific assistants (category C). The maximum that may be paid for doctoral students at universities is the effective cost of the salary (gross salary plus the employer's share of social costs). If no proof of such payments is provided, rates for doctoral students will be paid in accordance with the guidelines of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)².

No further payments for overheads will be made in accordance with Art. 16, para. 6 RIPA.

Working hours

The basic working time is 1,824 hours per person per year or 152 hours per person per month.

Expenses and attendance fees for experts

Expenses

Travel: Half price in 1st class or a vehicle allowance of CHF 0.70/km from the place of work.

Meals Main meal CHF 27.50, breakfast CHF 14.

Overnight accommodation The actual cost incurred for accommodation away from home in a mid-range hotel (reference price CHF 180)

Attendance fees for experts

Applies to monitoring groups, hearings, for example.

Duration of meetings

Up to 5 hours: maximum CHF 800 plus travel expenses;

² www.snf.ch → Funding → How to → Documents & downloads → Regulations → Annex 12: Salary ranges, guidelines for employees in SNSF-funded projects and blankets amounts for social security contributions"



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More than 5 hours: maximum CHF 1,400 plus travel expenses.

These rates include expenses incurred for preparation and follow-up work in connection with meetings and for travel and meals.

No attendance fees will be paid to administrative staff from the State, municipalities and cantons (including professors) nor to representatives of associations and organisations.

Compensation for members of the Federal Energy Research Commission CORE is regulated by the Ordinance on the organisation of the government and the administration (RVOV).



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Appendix 2 Evaluation criteria

The project has to fulfill **all** eligibility criteria to be evaluated.

Eligibility criteria

Formal criteria:

Criteria		
F1	Is the application complete (does the proposal include all information requested in the call)?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
F2	Are the objectives of the research project clear and is the research proposal well structured?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
F3	Was the application submitted in time?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
F4	In the case of scientific publications: Is Open Access granted?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

Content related criteria:

Criteria		
C1	Do the research questions to be addressed fit the call, and do they fall into the competence of the SFOE?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
C2	May the findings of the project be made accessible to the public? (See provisions on monitoring and open access in the Directive on the submission and evaluation of applications for financial support of energy research, pilot and demonstration projects)	Yes No

Qualitative Criteria

Each of the sub-criteria will be scored on a scale from 1 to 5. The 1–5 scoring system for each sub-criterion indicates the following assessment:

- 1 – Poor: The sub-criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2 – Unsatisfactory: The sub-criterion is broadly addressed but there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 – Satisfactory: The sub-criterion is addressed but with a number of shortcomings.
- 4 – Good: The sub-criterion is well addressed but with a number of shortcomings.
- 5 – Very Good: All relevant aspects of the sub-criterion are addressed; any shortcomings are minor.

For a project to qualify for an invitation³ to submit a full proposal to the second round of the call, each qualitative criterion (Q1 to Q5) has to obtain a minimum score listed in the table. Some sub-criteria are also subject to a minimum score. The score for each qualitative criterion (Q1 to Q5) is the average of the listed sub-criteria. The criteria are weighted as indicated below.

³ Qualifying is a necessary condition for an invitation to the second round, but not a sufficient condition.



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Criterion	Minimum evaluation
Q1 Organisation (weight: 1.0)	ø 3
<p>Competencies, organisation, responsibility</p> <p>Are all the competencies crucial to the project covered? Has a clear project organisation been established? Are the responsibilities laid down clearly?</p>	At least 3
<p>Schedule and milestones</p> <p>Is the proposed schedule realistic and efficiently drawn up? Have clearly measurable milestones been stipulated (stage-gate targets)?</p>	
<p>Cost-benefit ratio, subsidiarity</p> <p>Does a project hold out the prospect of significant benefits in relationship to the costs involved? Have sufficient in-kind contributions and third-party funds been promised?</p>	

Criterion	Minimum evaluation
Q2 Excellence (weight: 1.0)	ø 3
<p>Preliminary work, suitability, expertise</p> <p>Can the project team build on previous work? Does the project team have the expertise required (suitability)?</p>	
<p>Academic record, recognition</p> <p>Does the project team have broad experience (academic record) or are they recognised specialists in their field?</p>	
<p>Teams' potential for success</p> <p>Is clear potential for success discernible in this project team?</p>	
Q3 Content of project (weight: 2.0)	ø 3
<p>Relevance, national and international cooperation</p> <p>Is the project scientifically, politically and strategically relevant and does the content contribute to a research priority set out in the call? Is it part of an international cooperation within the IEA⁴ or the EU research programme, or is it part of other national or international collaboration schemes (e.g. DACH)?</p>	At least 3
<p>Value creation, innovative content</p> <p>Do the findings lead us to expect high value creation for Switzerland - in an economic or scientific respect? Does the project build up a large body of knowledge or know-how and/or does it pursue an innovative or novel approach?</p>	
<p>Approach, methodology and data</p> <p>Is the proposed approach suitable to deal with the issue? Is the methodology adequate to solve the issue? Is access to the data required guaranteed/has the strategy to compile data been clearly defined?</p>	At least 3

⁴ The most important aspect here is that the project is scientifically, politically and strategically relevant and that the content contributes to a research priority set out in the call. A national or international cooperation would be viewed positively, but is not a necessity.



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Q4	Opportunities, risks (weight: 1.0)	ø 3
<p>Energy potential Does the project contribute to a safe, sustainable and economical energy provision or to a lower and rational energy consumption?</p>		
<p>Discussion in public or before a professional audience Are the research findings of interest to the general public? Do the findings constitute a useful foundation for the opinion building and decision-making processes among informed people?</p>		
<p>Sustainability Will the findings contribute to sustainable development in all three dimensions (ecological, economic and social) at national or global level?</p>		
Q5	Monitoring, dissemination, and educational effects (weight: 1.0)	None
<p>Monitoring Is a monitoring or other accompanying activity such as workshops or a monitoring group planned?</p>		
<p>Knowledge transfer Are knowledge transfer and publications planned? Is an open access / data / model strategy included?</p>		
<p>Promotion of doctoral candidates Are doctoral candidates working on the project?</p>		