



SWEET Call 1-2024

Questions and answers (Q&A)

Please read carefully the SWEET Call Guideline and this Q&A document.



1 Questions related to the pre-proposal phase

Q 1.1: Can wastewater treatment plants also take part in this call for proposals? Or are only industry, waste incineration plants and agriculture eligible?

Answer: Of course, a wastewater treatment plant can also become part of the consortium. Please note that in addition to industry and the private sector, universities or institutes of the ETH domain as well as universities of applied sciences must also be part of the consortium (see Section 3.3 of the Call Guideline).

Q 1.2: Could you possibly connect us to possible consortia?

Answer: The SFOE does not get involved in the formation of consortia. After 8 May, the SWEET Office will publish the names of the coordinators of those consortia that have submitted a notification of intent to submit a pre-proposal (see Section 4.1 of the Call Guideline) and that have agreed to the publication of their names.

Q 1.3: Would a project on improving the climate impact of the Swiss food system, i.e., from regenerative farming practices, to improved food supply/value chains, to consumers' behavioral changes, qualify as part of the consortium's portfolio of projects?

Answer: Yes, such a project would be within the scope of research challenge 1.

Q 1.4: Is industry eligible to receive funding in the SWEET scheme?

Answer: Yes, industry is eligible for SWEET funding as a private for-profit institution (see Table 3-1 in the Call Guideline).

Q 1.5: Can a senior scientist, with proved experience in integration and/or KTT, be appointed as "integration expert" or "KTT expert"?

Answer: Yes, a senior scientist can become an integration expert or KTT expert if they have the necessary experience. For example, the KTT expert is expected to have at least 2 years of experience with KTT (see Section 3.2.4 in the Call Guideline).

Q 1.6: Is the consortium supposed to address the 4 research questions, or can a subset be selected?

Answer: Consortia are required to address all four research challenges.

Q 1.7: According to SWEET rules, federal offices are not eligible for SWEET funding. I'm not sure whether Agroscope, which is affiliated to the FOEN, falls under this rule or whether they are allowed to apply for funding?

Answer: Agroscope is affiliated with the Federal Office for Agriculture, see the Organigramme available [here](#). Therefore, referring to Table 3-1 in the Call Guideline, Agroscope falls under "Federal department and its administrative units" and is not eligible for SWEET funding.



Q 1.8: Several existing and planned federal instruments (e.g., FOEN's impact of environmental technology promotion (UTF) programme, SFOE's Pilot + Demonstration (P+D) programme, the future SFOE's instrument associated with the Climate and Innovation Law) can support measures or projects in the CCS/NET domains relevant to the SWEET Call. Is it possible to benefit from the support of the instrument of the Climate and Innovation Law, for example, to co-finance a project included in the proposed SWEET portfolio?

Answer: As described in the Call Guideline, Section 3.4.4, the cumulation of federal financial assistance to fund a project is inadmissible if the legal provisions or rules of any of the concerned funding instruments are breached. For instance, if funding from one instrument has been secured and that assistance is sufficient for the project to go ahead, applying for assistance from other instruments for the same project or part of it would result in an inadmissible cumulation (double funding) (Article 6 letter c and Article 7 letters c and d of the Federal Subsidies Act (SR 616.1)). Similarly, an inadmissible cumulation would occur if the maximum funding rate of one instrument is violated by the assistance from other instruments. In the specific case of the Climate and Innovation Law, Article 6 letter 4 precludes any cumulation of support.

To prevent inadmissible cumulations, members of SWEET consortia that seek simultaneously financial assistance from several federal instruments must clearly disclose all sources of financing in the pre- and full proposal (see Section 8 of the pre-proposal template) and inform all concerned authorities (Article 12 of the Federal Subsidies Act (SR 616.1)).

Q 1.9: We could potentially submit a proposal on Enhanced Rock Weathering and its application to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with Swiss agricultural production. It seems like Enhanced Rock Weathering could address your first research challenge. Could you please tell us if you think this would be suitable within the context of your call?

Answer: Yes, this would be within the scope of research challenge 1.

Q 1.10: If several professors (PIs) from the same research institute take part into the same consortium, does each of them count as a consortium member? Is subcontracting within the same institute allowed?

Answer: If several professors belong to the same institute, but these professors run their own laboratories or groups, then each professor would count as a member.

Subcontracting within the same institute is allowed. However, subcontracting should not be used as a mechanism to circumvent the link between the core budget and the number of members (see Section 3.4.1 of the Call Guideline). In SWEET, the SFOE expects a subcontractor's contributions to the work programme to be clearly defined, limited in scope, and clearly lie outside the fields of expertise of consortium members and collaboration partners. Dedicating a considerable portion of SWEET funding to subcontracting broader tasks over longer durations would not be consistent with this expectation. Accordingly, pre-proposals and full proposals must explain why a subcontractor's contributions cannot be provided by consortium members and collaboration partners. The SFOE will closely scrutinize the pre-proposal and full proposal as well as the consortium's scientific and financial reporting to ensure that subcontracting is not used to circumvent the link between the core budget and the consortium members.

Q 1.11: Should each proposal address all four research questions of the call? If so, should each of these questions receive an equal allocation of resources within the proposal?

Answer: Consortia are required to address all four research challenges (see also the answer to Q 1.6). It is up to consortia to decide how to allocate resources. Note that you will be required to describe your overall approach to answering the four research challenges in Section 6 of the



pre-proposal template, including how you will meet the requirements attached to the research challenges.

Q 1.12: In case of demonstrators that will be applied for separately with the SFOE P+D Program (but that will be proposed within the SWEET scheme), must the research partners for these demonstrators all be included in the 17 research partners of the SWEET consortium? Or can the “P+D consortium” be extended to other researchers/partners?

Answer: Partners that do not receive SWEET funding – irrespective of whether they intend to apply for P+D funding or not – are not members and therefore do not count toward the number of members in Section 3.4.1 of the Call Guideline.

Q 1.13: Could you please advise if a simple email is sufficient to express our interest by the May 8th deadline or if there are additional formalities or channels through which we should communicate this?

Answer: The notification must be made by the host institution using the corresponding template, which can be found on our website [Current SWEET call for proposals: Net-Zero \(admin.ch\)](#) (see also Section 4.1 of the Call Guideline).

Q 1.14: We would appreciate clarification on whether medium-sized companies can participate independently or if collaboration with a research institute or university is necessary?

Answer: The SWEET call is not open to applications by individual participants, but only to consortia. A consortium must be led by a host institution, which must be a Swiss institution of higher education (see Section 3.2.1 of the Call Guideline). The consortium itself must consist of at least 5 different member institutions (see Section 3.3 of the Call Guideline for a detailed list of consortium requirements). There is no restriction regarding the size of companies that can participate.

Q 1.15: We are working on the topic of electrical treatment of weed for sustainable farming. This technology leads to reduction of CO₂ emission from the soil, comparing to other weed treatment methods. Would this topic be in the scope of Challenge 1?

Answer: Yes, this approach is within the scope of research challenge 1.

Q 1.16: In the ‘Call Guidelines’ it states that you are not involved in the formation of consortia. Would it still be possible to join the consortia once their names are known after 08.05.23?

Answer: The SFOE does not restrict changes in the consortia after 8 May. Whether a given consortium is willing to accept you as a member is their choice and will depend on whether they are already at the limit of the consortium size and whether your approach fits within their work programme.

Q 1.17: We are aware that foreign members are subject to SFOE approval and should be declared in the preproposal notification form. Should we also declare in this notification form foreign collaboration partners that do not receive SWEET funding? And what about foreign subcontractors?

Answer: No, foreign collaboration partners do not require approval and therefore do not need to be specified in the notification.



Foreign subcontractors receive (indirect) funding and must therefore be specified in the notification in exactly the same way as members. We have not yet considered this possibility, so it has not yet been included in the template and the Call Guideline. However, this option will be implemented immediately. Please use the new template version attached if you have foreign subcontractors. The new template will also be available on the website with immediate effect and will be requested (retrospectively) from all consortia that register.

Q 1.18: Should the KTT and Integration experts already be known at the pre-proposal stage? Do these people count each as single consortium members (e.g., this leaves only 14 members for research)?

Answer: Yes, these experts must already be known with the pre-proposal stage, as the CVs must be submitted with the pre-proposal (see Section 4.2 of the Call Guideline).

If the two experts are in the same lab/group (= in the same member entity), then only one counts as a member.

Q 1.19: Does a private non-profit foundation fall into category 3.c of the required consortium members (section 3.3 in the Call Guideline): "2 member institutions from Swiss industry and/or the Swiss private sector"?

Answer: Yes, a private non-profit foundation counts as an institution from the private sector in the context of this SWEET call for proposals.

Q 1.20: Could a consortium member be at the same time collaboration partner in another consortium? What would be the rules/limitations then?

Answer: Yes, it is possible for a member of one consortium to be a collaboration partner of another consortium. There are no additional rules except that the member/collaboration partner must inform the coordinators of all affected consortia.

Q 1.21: It is not clear to us whether the entities participating in SWEET P+Ds are entitled to receive P+D funding based on the distinction between members and collaboration partners done for the SWEET call. In other words, can entities that are not members of the SWEET consortium (e.g., collaboration partners) receive funding through the SWEET P+D? Or is the P+D funding reserved exclusively for the consortium members too?

Answer: The distinction between members and collaboration partners is based solely on whether they apply for SWEET funding, see Sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 in the Call Guideline. Since the P+D projects in the project portfolio are not financed through SWEET, but through the P+D programme, collaboration partners may apply for funding from that programme.

Q 1.22: What exactly is required in Appendix A of the pre-proposal? We find it difficult to select the "processes" of the work programme that should be analysed through an LCA. Could you perhaps provide a few explanatory examples?

Answer: Any of the processes that you propose to investigate or develop in your work programme, especially in the context of answering research challenges 1 and 4, should be included in Appendix A. To take an entirely hypothetical example: You might plan to develop a novel process for capturing CO₂ in waste-to-energy plants to reduce unintentional amine emissions.



However, the production of the materials required for the process might entail higher GHG emissions or further reduce the thermal output of waste-to-energy plants. The preliminary LCA in the appendix is supposed to give a first indication of such trade-offs.

Q 1.23: Does a private non-profit foundation count as one partner of the private sector regardless of which departments are involved?

Answer: It depends on the direction of the question: The consortium requirements (see Section 3.3 in the Call Guideline) distinguish between member institutions. There it does not matter how many departments are involved. For the calculation of the core budget, however, Table 1-2 of the pre-proposal is used, where a distinction is made between member entities (see Table 3-2 in the Call Guideline for the definition of member institution and member entity).

Q 1.24: How many pages can we use (in total) to describe the projects? If we use 2 pages per project and have 20 projects in total, that's 40 pages... is that too much?

Answer: As indicated in the pre-proposal template, there is a page limit of max. 2 pages per WP, regardless of the number of WPs in a consortium.

Q 1.25: Are living labs to be considered as P+D, or as research projects?

Answer: P+D in the context of SWEET means projects funded by the SFOE's P+D programme. Please note that funding for these projects must be applied for separately (see Section 3.4.3 in the Call Guideline) and that there is no guarantee of funding from the P+D programme. Whether living lab projects are considered P+D or research projects depends on what is being investigated and whether the requirements of the P+D programme are met.

Q 1.26: Regarding the answer to question Q1.22 on LCAs: What is meant by 'novel' process? And do we also have to submit this preliminary LCA for P+D projects?

Answer: Please note the formulation at the beginning of Appendix A: "For each of the processes to be investigated or developed in the work programme". Thus, it does not matter whether the process you intend to investigate is novel or not and whether you intend to investigate it in a research project or a P+D project.

Q 1.27: At the pre-proposal stage, if a collaboration partner cannot give an estimate of its own contribution, how shall we proceed when filling in the budget Excel table?

Answer: If a collaboration partner cannot provide an estimate of its own or third-party contributions at the pre-proposal stage, the corresponding entry in the budget workbook is set to CHF 0.

Q 1.28: Besides personnel time, can laboratory equipment and facilities also be declared as in-kind contributions from collaboration partners?

Answer: In-kind contributions from collaboration partners may include costs related to personnel time, as well as use of equipment and facilities, and they are declared as own contributions. Depreciation is not eligible. See Section 3.4.4 and Table 3-4 in the Call Guideline for more details.



Q 1.29: Does the money contributed by the collaboration partners need to be allocated to the different work packages?

Answer: The contributions by collaboration partners must be included in columns F and H of the first table (entitled “Overview by WP”). However, at the pre-proposal stage, you do not yet have to indicate how much each collaboration partner contributes to each WP. (As a check, note that same amounts should appear in lines 42 and 125.)

Q 1.30: Aren’t (a) and (b) in point 8 of the self-declaration section of the pre-proposal contradictory? Why should we declare federal funding if federal cross-funding is forbidden (and thus not occurring)?

Answer: Point 8(a) is linked to Table 8-1 of the pre-proposal template and was intended as a kind of safeguard to ensure that information on federal financial assistance could be available. The table should be empty on account of points 7, 8(b) and 8(c) in the self-declarations.

Q 1.30: Does Horizon Europe e.g. SEFRI funding count as federal funding?

Answer: Yes, since Swiss contributions to Horizon Europe projects are currently being financed by the Federal Government, they count as federal funding.