



Research Programme Energy-Economy-Society (EES/EWG) Call 2025-2026 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 2025 to 2028, 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 and authorisation of sandbox projects](#) (19.12.2024 version) applies.

Scope

In 2025-2026, researchers are invited to submit research proposals in one of the following fields (see below). The projects must be strongly related to Switzerland.

1) Efficient integration of renewables in the Swiss energy system: Regulation, energy market design and energy policies for an efficient and secure Swiss energy system based on renewables

Until presently, energy policy has focused strongly on building up renewable production capacity in the promotion of investments in renewables. As installed capacity increases, the focus is switching to the efficient integration of renewables in the energy system. Projects should focus on the development of technical concepts, regulation, energy market design and energy policies and offer solutions for the transition from the current to an optimized regulation.

We are looking for projects that propose **both technical and regulatory solutions (see point A and B)** for the integration of renewables and propose technical and regulatory solutions for an efficient and secure Swiss energy system based on renewables. The following questions **are examples** of research questions of interest. While proposals need not address every question listed, they should respond to at least a subset and may incorporate additional, relevant research questions.

A) From a technical power system point of view:

- How should renewable power plants be designed in terms of their energy source, size and location, and particularly their technical features, such as the functionalities of power electronic converters, dimensioning and combination with decentral storage, to be efficient and beneficial from a power system point of view?
- *Zusammenschluss zum Eigenverbrauch, Lokale Elektrizitätsgemeinschaften, Eigenverbrauch*: What is the demand flexibility potential of these enabling models in relevant constellations of these models in Switzerland? How can this potential be technically exploited, and at what cost?

B) From a regulatory point of view:

- How can Switzerland promote investment in such installations? How should policies and regulation be designed?





- Do present policies/regulation (incl. *Zusammenschluss zum Eigenverbrauch*, *Lokale Elektrizitätsgemeinschaften* and *Eigenverbrauch*) provide incentives for investment into renewables and energy infrastructure that are not optimal from a system point of view? Does the current regulatory framework prevent the three models from behaving grid-friendly? How can these incentives be corrected?
- What policies can efficiently promote the provision of flexibility to the system?
- Electricity price signals: how can price signals for the grid and the energy component be coordinated to promote both efficient grid expansion and system efficiency?
- How compatible are developments with the EU regulatory framework?
- What consumer behavioural aspects have to be taken into account?

Projects will be coordinated with the SFOE project “Electricity market 2040”. 2-3 workshops have to be integrated for this coordination into the budget of the projects. Projects have to start in August 2026.

Supported projects (total including both technical **and** regulatory aspects) receive public funding in the order of 200–500 kCHF and have a duration of a maximum of 24 months.

Topic 1 is being announced in collaboration with the SFOE Research programme [Electricity](#). Please note that **proposals for Topic 1 must be submitted as part of this EES/EWG call**. The evaluation and approval of Topic 1 proposals is subject to the rules of this EES/EWG call only.

2) Incentivising investments into energy efficiency in buildings

Buildings account for a substantial share of both energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Switzerland. Ambitious refurbishment rates and efficient refurbishment strategies are essential for a successful green energy transition and for reaching Switzerland’s GHG reduction goals. The regulatory setting for refurbishment of buildings is evolving in Switzerland: promotion schemes are changing, and the acceptance by popular vote of the “*Bundesbeschluss über die kantonalen Liegenschaftssteuern auf Zweitliegenschaften*” is impacting incentives related to refurbishment.

The following questions are examples of research questions of interest. While proposals need not address every question listed, they should respond to at least a subset and may incorporate additional, relevant research questions.

- How can energy efficiency refurbishment be incentivised efficiently in the new regulatory setting accounting for the global warming potential (GWP) over a building’s whole life cycle?
- What differentiation of policies by geographical location, building and owner/renter characteristics would be possible/efficient? What would the distributional and social impact of the policies be?

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

3) Economic impact of energy and climate policies

The SFOE/the federal administration wants to promote the build up/the upkeep of modelling capacities in Switzerland (application from both public academic institutions and the private sector are welcome) to analyse ex ante the economic impact of energy and climate policies (impact on GDP, employment, welfare, distributional impact). The model should be dynamic and allow for multi-country analysis of policies in a net zero emissions setting.



The project should include the analysis of the economic impact of illustrative scenarios that showcase model capabilities.

The model has to be made available to the public (open model).

Supported projects receive public funding in the order of 200–400 kCHF and have a duration between 24 and 48 months.

4) The role of consumers in the Swiss green energy transition

The role of consumers in decentralized and – possibly – liberalized energy markets is evolving rapidly. Behavioural insights (based on psychological, social and microeconomic methods) are needed to improve energy market and energy policy design during the green energy transition to empower citizens to make decisions that facilitate individual well-being.

The following questions are examples of research questions of interest. While proposals need not address every question listed, they should respond to at least a subset and may incorporate additional, relevant research questions.

- What are particularly relevant consumer/social behaviours in the context of the green energy transition?
- How can concrete energy policies/market designs for the green energy transition be improved by behavioural insights?

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



Timeline

1 December 2025	Launch of the call
15 January 2026	Deadline for questions regarding the call
16 February 2026	Deadline for submission of pre-proposals
End of March 2026	Notification of accepted pre-proposals
May 2026	Deadline for full proposal submission
June 2026	Notification of accepted projects
August 2026 – January 2027	Launch of accepted projects

Contact Information

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

Dr Anne-Kathrin Faust

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Phone +41 58 465 54 45

The deadline for questions is 15 January 2026. Answers to questions of general interest and relevance will be published anonymously on the [EES Website](#) before 22 January 2026.

After 15 January, only administrative questions will be answered.

Until 27 January, administrative questions may be addressed to Anne-Kathrin Faust. From 28 January, please contact Dr Michael Moser michael.moser@bfe.admin.ch.

No extension of the deadline will be granted.

Eligibility

The call is addressed to universities (including ETH-domain), universities of applied science, further research organisations 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 rules provided in the Appendix 1 (Remuneration of personnel expenses in research projects). The Energy-Economy-Society research programme does not pay any contribution to hardware and 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 research field “**Efficient integration of renewables in the Swiss energy system**” (Topic 1 in collaboration with the SFOE Research programme [Electricity](#)) being an exception. 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.

¹ Please beware that the EES 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).



The call budget depends on the requested distribution of the payments over the fiscal years and on the improvement of annual credits by Parliament. It will be communicated after the first round.

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 and authorisation of sandbox projects](#).

Application Procedure

The call follows a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure. First, a pre-proposal (max. 6 pages, see the EES / EWG pre-proposal template for the Call 2025-2026 on the Research Programme Energy-Economy-Society [website](#)) 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 (=coordinator) 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 (subject: EES_Call_2025-2026_nameofmainprojectpartner) to energieforschung@bfe.admin.ch, by 16 February 2026.

The receipt of the pre-proposal will be confirmed in due time. If you do not receive confirmation of your pre-proposal submission by 20 February 2026 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.



Appendix 1 Remuneration of personnel expenses in research projects

Principle

The determination of the own personnel costs of the project partners is based on the actual hours worked and the actual gross salaries paid to the employees plus the following supplements:

- Employer contributions according to AHVG / IVG / EOG, BVG, AVIG and UVG.
- Opportunity costs due to incomplete productive utilization of employees, e.g. due to vacations, training, internal administrative work, order acquisition etc.
- In the case of private companies, additional opportunity costs in connection with loss of revenue and profits due to development activities.

The defined maximum hourly rates merely specify the upper limit of the allowable project costs. In case of doubt, the declared hourly rates and expenses must be substantiated. Self-employed persons who do not pay themselves a salary may declare gross salaries customary in the market for an equivalent position without a management function.

The following rule of thumb can be used to roughly estimate the permissible hourly rate: The employee's gross salary divided by the regular yearly working hours (usually 2'100 h at 100% workload) and multiplied by a supplement factor. This factor is 1.5 for universities and public research institutions and 2.0 for private companies.

Functional categories

The eligibility of hourly rates depends, among other things, on the function and, in a broader sense, on the education and training of the employee:

Category	Universities & public research institutions	Private companies
A ¹⁹	Professor	Upper management/ Head of company or division
B	Senior scientist (min. 5 years experience after graduation/PhD)	Middle management/ Head of business unit or team
C	Post-doc (max. 5 years of experience after graduation/PhD)	Expert with high education and/or min. 5 years of relevant work experience
D	PhD student or technical/scientific staff member	Expert with low education and/or max. 5 years of relevant work experience

¹⁹: For category A, a maximum of 20% of the total working hours and not more than 200 hours per year and employee may be declared. This limit may only be exceeded if it is proven that the increased cooperation of these persons is indispensable for the implementation of the project.



Maximum hourly rates:

For the defined organization types and function categories, the following maximum hourly rates apply. However, these only represent the highest possible rates that will be accepted. Decisive for determining the hourly rates are the effective salary costs (see rule of thumb). Calculation examples: According to the rule of thumb, an hourly rate of 115 CHF/h in a university corresponds approximately to a gross salary of CHF 161,000. An hourly rate of 135 CHF/h in a private company corresponds approximately to a gross salary of CHF 142'000.-.

Category	Universities & public research institutions	Private companies
A	135 CHF/h	170 CHF/h
B	115 CHF/h	135 CHF/h
C	80 CHF/h	115 CHF/h
D	50 CHF/h	90 CHF/h



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)?	yes no
F2	Are the objectives of the research project clear and is the research proposal well structured?	yes no
F3	Was the application submitted in time?	yes no
F4	In the case of scientific publications: Is Open Access granted?	yes 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?	yes 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 and authorisation of sandbox 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 invitation² 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.

² Qualifying is a necessary condition for an invitation to the second round, but not a sufficient condition.



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? Are the essential skills for organising the project (management experience, communication, etc.) covered and are all relevant partners (including research infrastructures) involved? 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 earmarked?</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 (within the competencies)?</p>	
<p>Academic record, recognition</p> <p>Does the project team have broad experience and are members of the project team recognised among experts (academic record: national and international specialist publications, experience as part of expert committees)?</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 IEA³ 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

³ 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.



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>For topics 2 to 4: Promotion of doctoral candidates Are doctoral candidates working on the project?</p> <p>For topic 1: Potential as a multiplier When compared to the current state of technology, does the technology/procedure display technical or economic advantages that indicate it has potential as a multiplier</p>		