

Press Release

27th of August 2009

Official call for tenders as of September 2009 for the *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* programme for researchers from the new EU member states

Within its contribution to the reduction of disparities within the enlarged EU, Switzerland supports the training of researchers. As of September 2009 the *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* Scientific Exchange Programme enters the stage of implementation. Researchers from the eight new European Union member states are invited to compete for research fellowships of between six and 24 months in the framework of this programme. The Rectors Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) implements the programme in collaboration with the University of Fribourg, based on a mandate by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The "Scientific Exchange Programme between Switzerland and the New Member States of the European Union (*Sciex-NMS^{ch}*)", financed from the Swiss contribution to the reduction of disparities within the enlarged EU, will be coordinated and implemented by the CRUS and the University of Fribourg, **based on a mandate by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**. The programme aims at facilitating research stays in Swiss research teams to doctoral (PhD) and PostDoc candidates from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Swiss research institutions, under the auspices of the SDC, jointly developed the concept of the *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* programme.

During the pilot phase, which was organised by CRUS, 70 researchers at the Universities of Basel, Bern, the EPFL, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, the University of Applied Sciences Bern, HES-SO, FH-NW and the EMPA developed in cooperation with the Czech Coordination Body innovative, user-friendly and efficient processes and forms. Ten excellent young researchers from Poland and the Czech Republic emerged from this Pilot phase as Sciex Fellows and they will participate at the public Researchers' Night in Zürich on the 25th of September 2009 which marks the beginning of their research stay in Switzerland.

Integration for up to two years in the most suitable research team

For six to 24 months, Sciex Fellows will join a research team at a Swiss partner institution. They will be fully integrated in the on-going research work, contribute their own ideas and results and benefit from specific knowledge through exchanges with experienced professionals and young researchers. Doctoral candidates will be able to prepare a doctoral degree under the joint supervision of their own supervisor and the Mentor at the Swiss institution.

The criteria for assignment of Fellowships focus on the professional commitment of the Fellow and the Mentors, the specific objectives and the quality of the research project, the mutual benefit of the collaboration with the Swiss team and the degree of support assured by both partner institutions.

Joint application by researchers from the home and host institutions

The *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* programme is open to all scientific disciplines. Qualified researchers with a concrete research project will identify the Swiss researchers, who are interested in their project and who are best suited for supporting them. The participants from both the home country and Switzerland submit together an application. Sciex Regional Offices in Switzerland (one in each university canton) and the Coordination Bodies in the respective partner countries – will reply to any questions regarding the *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* application forms.

First call for tenders in September 2009, programme timetable

The first official call for tenders will be made in September 2009 on the programme website www.sciex.ch. It will also be published in the partner countries. The final date for submission, in the case of the Czech Republic and Poland, is 1st of November (2009-14) and for the other countries 1st of April (2010-15). The decisions to accept/reject applications will be taken by the *Sciex-NMS^{ch}* Steering Committee at the end of March (Czech Republic and Poland) and the end of August (other countries), and will be communicated to the applicants thereafter.

Further information

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