



# **SNF Fördermöglichkeiten aus Perspektive der biomedizinischen und klinischen Forschung**

CTU Lectures, 8 November 2016, Inselspital



SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

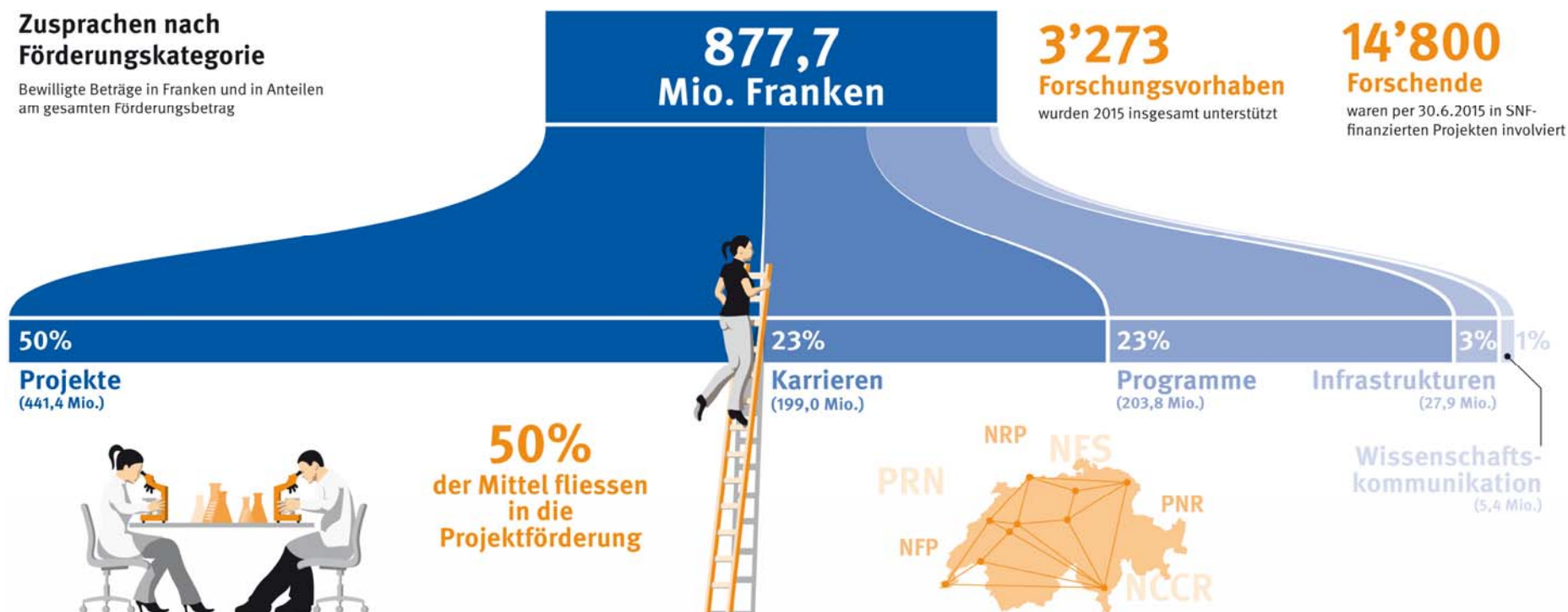
**Ayşim Yilmaz, Raphael Banz**



# Der SNF in Zahlen 2015

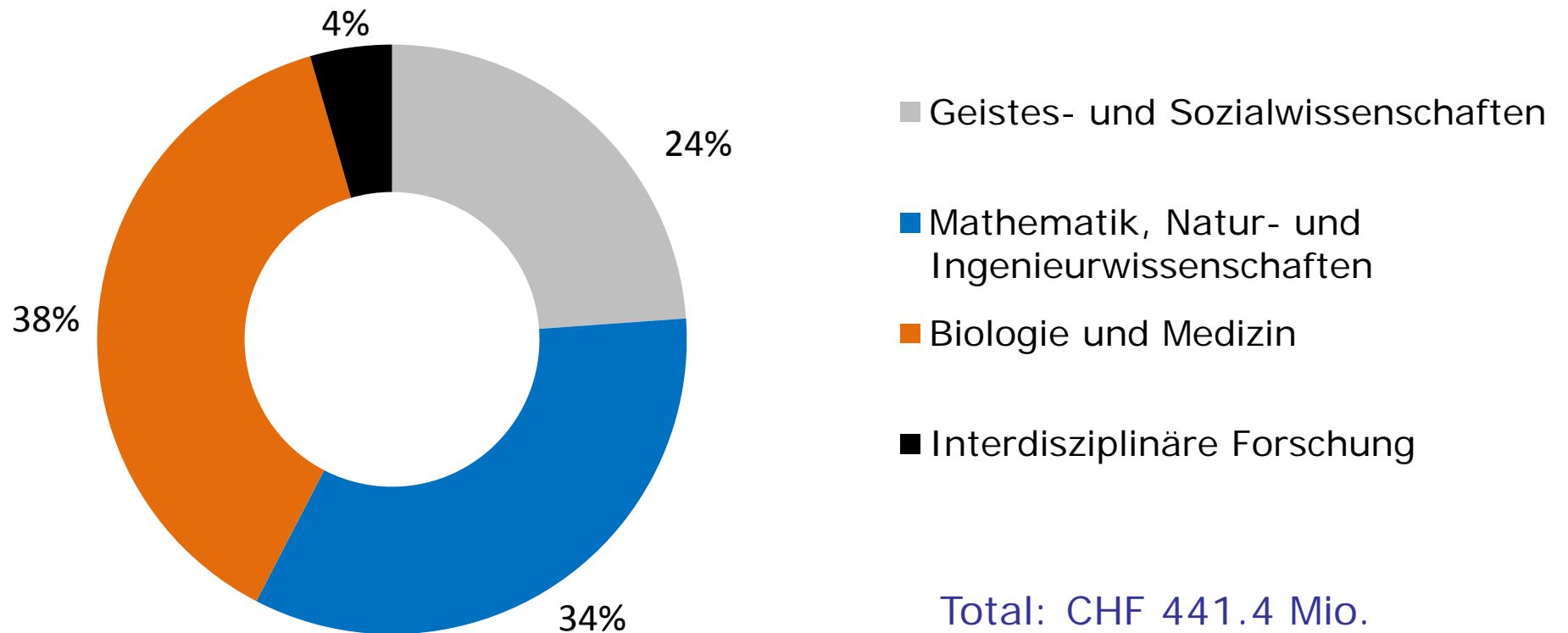
## Zusprachen nach Förderungskategorie

Bewilligte Beträge in Franken und in Anteilen am gesamten Förderungsbetrag





## Projekte – Zusprachen nach Wissenschaftsgebiet 2015



## Project funding



### **Core “business” of the SNSF**

Funding for projects of **high quality** in all scientific disciplines

**Topics can be chosen freely** by scientists

- Covers **direct research costs**  
(staff salaries, materials, travel costs, collaborations etc.)
- Does **not** cover the applicants' salaries (⇒ [SNF career funding](#))



## Innovations in research funding

- **Core objectives of innovations**
- Eligibility requirements
- Grant conditions in project funding
- Project partners and subcontracting
- Eligible costs and career measures
- Employment of staff



## Core objectives of innovations in research funding

- Respond to researchers' needs (client survey)
- Provide clear and well-coordinated **funding options at each stage** (of career)
- Help **young researchers** to achieve early independence
- Create clear responsibilities in projects with regard to scientific merits
- Promote **diversity**
- Reduce **administration work**
- Allow more flexible use of funds
- Bring project duration closer into line with the duration of **doctoral theses**
- Set out **clear rules** for submitting proposals and using grants



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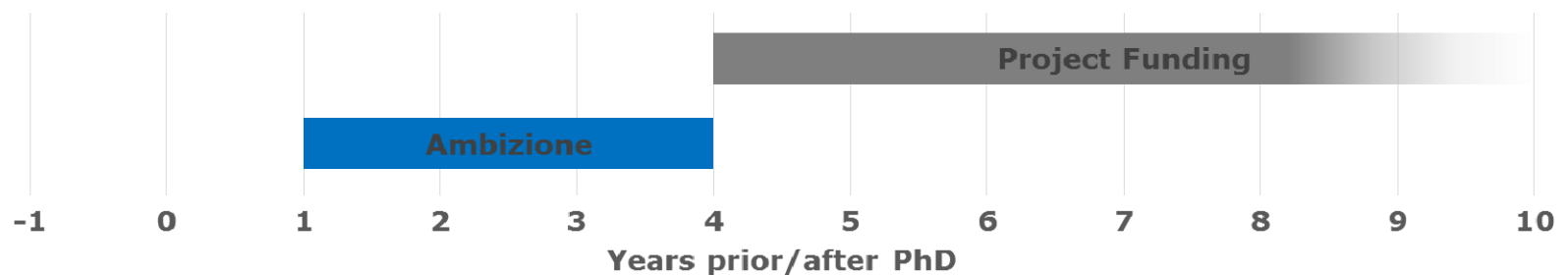
## General eligibility requirements

- Based on **self declaration**, confirmed by institution, if necessary
- **Employed at least 50% FTE over full duration of grant**, but
- Researchers devoting less than 50% of their time to science are eligible **if their scientific research and teaching activities** are usually carried out **as part of another professional activity** (e.g., clinicians).
- Lecturing assignments per se, honorary professorships per se or other titles as well as links within the scope of collaborations or visiting professorships **do not entail eligibility to submit applications, unless the above points are met**
- **eligibility criteria for institutions** (RIPA) must be met, particularly with regard to the **non-commercial purpose**
- if collaborating with **companies, independence of research** must be guaranteed



## Eligibility requirements for project funding

- Professional researchers **with at least 4 years' experience after the doctorate (or an independent research position)** will be able to submit applications.
- Researchers with **less research experience** will be able to use the **Ambizione scheme** (implementation scheduled for early 2017)





## Eligibility requirements for project funding

**Four years after doctoral thesis or an independent position, notably:**

- Full professors
- Assistant professors
- Chief consultants, senior staff physicians, chief physicians
- Senior scientists / researchers
- Group leaders
- Senior assistants (Maître-assistantEs)
- Heads of teaching and research (Maître d'Enseignement et de Recherche)



## Eligibility requirements for project funding

### **Not eligible:**

- Postdocs
- Research associates
- Assistant physicians (Médecin assistant)
- Employees in SNSF projects
- Ambizione grantees
- SNSF professors in the first 2 years
- Honorary professors, Lecturers only eligible if research is main source of income (min. 50% employed)



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## Grant conditions in project funding

- **Maximum grant duration** increased from three to **four years**
- Minimum grant duration one year, minimal amount CHF 50'000
- **No fixed maximum amount** for grants (**but..**)
- **Excellence grants by invitation only: (3+3, 4+4)** for applications with the two highest ratings



## Grant conditions in project funding

- In principle, researchers holding **a grant for project funding** may **not hold another such grant** for the duration of the funding period.
- The SNSF may award a **second grant** if the overlapping research project is **thematically clearly different from the ongoing project** and if the applicant can show that he/she will make a **substantial contribution** to the second project as well.
- **Two or more applicants** are allowed if this is **essential** for successful completion of the project and if **each makes a major contribution** (otherwise: **project partner**)
- **Lead Agency projects** are counted as «normal» applications
- Only **one application** as applicant per submission period



## Grantees with a project grant can also ...

- submit a **Sinergia** application
- initiate an **NRP** or submit project proposals
- initiate an **NCCR** or submit project proposals
- apply for an **AP Energy Grants**
- participate in **ERA-NETs**
- participate in **Joint Programme Initiatives (JPIs)**
- participate in **international cooperation programmes** (e.g. bilateral programmes), such as PIRE
- submit an **Agora** application
- **Investigator Initiated Clinical Trial (IICT)**
- div 3: **large nested projects** to one of 9 cohorts supported by the SNSF



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## Project partners - Subcontracting

**Project partner** = makes a **scientific contribution**; at a public, private research institution **in CH or abroad** (PP can be at a company under the condition that the project does not result in a direct monetary benefit for the company)

- **max. 20% of funds**, exceptions are possible
- staff at institute of project partner cannot be employed through the SNSF projects

**Subcontracting** = buy-in of services, often from companies (not academia)

- **max. 10% of funds**, exceptions are possible, no employments

**Costs** of project partners and of subcontractors

- Services and costs should be **proportionate** and **economical**. Applicants must always contribute substantially to the project.



## Innovations in research funding

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## Eligible costs: **cost categories**

### Human Resources

- **Salaries and social security contributions**

### Conferences and workshops

### Collaborations (national & international)

### Direct costs for using infrastructures

### Costs of scientific open access publications

### Research costs

- **Material of enduring value, equipment**
- **Travel**
- **Third-party expenses**
  - Costs for project partner
  - Subcontracting
- **Computing time and data**

### Costs for career measures



## Awards in the form of global budgets

- **Global budgets** as the rule, in exceptional cases, limits for categories or budget items are defined by the SNSF
- Grant holders (applicants) **can dispose freely of the budget** within the framework of the applicable regulations and the submitted research plan and goals
- In any case, **changes to the project design** which will result in major deviations from the research plan and goals need **prior approval from the SNSF**



## Career measures

### **120% support grant**

- postdoctoral researchers with major child care duties employed in SNSF-funded research projects with at least 80% work-time percentage

### **Mobility for PhD students**

- Promotion of mobility for 6 – 12 months

→ can be applied for during the project running-time

### **Gender equality grant**

- Aimed at women researchers at doctoral or postdoctoral level
- CHF 1,000 per 12 months project running time for career support measures (mentoring, coaching, career development courses, networking meetings, etc.)

→ claim in final report, does not have to be applied for



## Career measures: Protected research time for clinicians

### **Pilot project**

- The SNSF aims to ensure that active clinicians can devote 30% of their working time (30% of a full-time equivalent) to their research projects  
→ Costs: SNF and employer / 50:50
- The initiative for protected research time for clinicians is currently planned to last till 2020

### **Requirements**

- Applicant in a project (to be) evaluated by the Biology and Medicine division
- Clinician does not already hold a structural position with budget responsibility at a hospital or an academic tenured position



## Conferences and workshops

Applicants will be able to charge costs for **project-related knowledge sharing events** to the project grant and will not have to apply for these costs separately.

- **Participation in and organisation** of workshops and conferences
- Travel, room & board and organisation costs are charged; the invited people must be of importance for the scientific exchange.
- Larger conferences and annual conferences of specialist associations have to be submitted separately (**conference grants**)

## Collaborations

Applicants will be able to link their project to one or more other projects in Switzerland or abroad.

- Only costs for scientific exchanges will be fundable
- Travel and room & board costs and additional research costs (incurred by the SNSF grantee) will be covered







## Direct costs for using infrastructures

- Only **costs directly related to the use of the infrastructure** are eligible (which may be difficult to distinguish)
- Paid only if it helps researchers to increase the efficiency and quality of their research (**relation to project goals**)
- **Host institutions** must be **transparent** about their infrastructure cost policy (negotiations ongoing)



## Research costs (red = new)

- **Material of enduring value, equipment** >100,000 CHF requires co-financing by the institution; usually 50%. (but consider R'EQUIP!)
- **Travel**
- **Expenses of third parties**
  - Costs for project partners (<20% of the budget, no salaries)
  - Subcontracting (<10% of the budget, no salaries)
- **Computing time and data** (cloud computing and data access)
- **Operating expenses**  
(Regulations include list of fundable and non-fundable items)



## Innovations in research funding

- Core objectives of innovations
- Eligibility requirements
- Grant conditions and restrictions in project funding
- Project partners and subcontracting
- Eligible costs and career measures
- **Employment of staff**

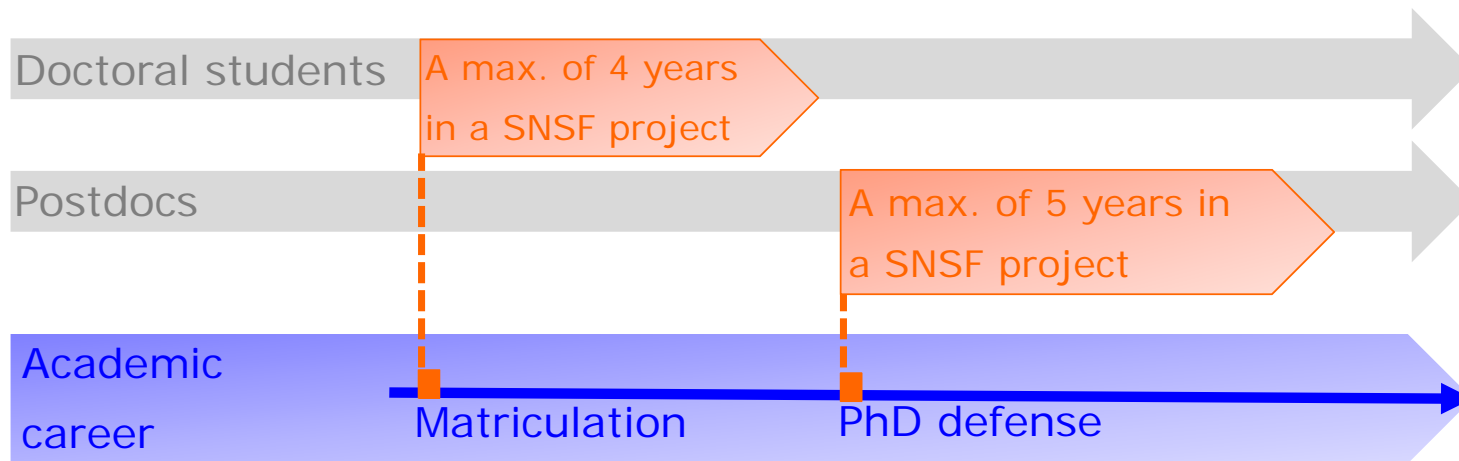


## Employee categories of the SNSF

- **Doctoral students**
- **Postdocs** (employees with a doctorate (PhD));
- **Other employees** – these include:
  - Employees with a degree, who don't want to do a doctorate;
  - Employees with a doctorate who do not plan to acquire further academic qualification in the context of the employment in question;
  - Technicians;
  - Auxiliary staff

same **salary limits** for postdocs and other employees

## Employment duration in SNSF projects



### ■ Reference point

- "Other employees": No constraints
- The **conditions of the universities** must be respected
- The SNSF does not finance **permanent positions**
- **extension of time eligibility window** up to **12 months** possible



## Extension of time eligibility window

**Eligibility** with respect to the **reference point** can be **extended by at most 1 year** because of

- Care duties, parental leave and child care duties
- Illness, service to the public
- Continuing education
- Participation in mandatory graduate schools before PhD



## Employees

### **Prolongation of running projects**

**Project duration** can be **extended for at most 1 year** for reasons related to project **staff**

- Care duties, parental leave and child care duties
  - Illness, service to the public
  - Continuing education
  - Participation in mandatory graduate schools before PhD
- 
- Needs consent of the grant holder
  - Is normally cost-neutral
  - Grant holder can apply for a new grant in parallel



## Innovations in research funding

- Core objectives of innovations
- Grant conditions
- Eligibility
- Eligible costs
- Career measures
- Employment of staff
- **Sinergia**



## The new Sinergia program



- Promotes **collaborative** and **interdisciplinary** research which has the **potential to shift paradigms (breakthrough)**
- The **new program** is a **merger** of the funding line for **interdisciplinary single projects** and the **old Sinergia program**
- **2-4 applicants** and their groups **collaborate** closely in a **network**
- **Grants** for **4 years** and up to **CHF 3.2 million**
- **Eligibility** and **eligible costs** as in project funding
- Deadlines in **June and December**



## MD-PhD

- National MD-PhD programme (program owner: ASSM)
  - Currently 44 MD-PhD students paid through the national programme
  - Co-financed by SAMS, SNSF and other foundations
  - administrated by SAMS
  - 11-14 stipends/year for 3 years (CHF 180'000)
  - Candidates pre-selected by local MD-PhD commission, final selection by expert panel
- 
- More info: [www.assm.ch](http://www.assm.ch) -> promotion -> Programme MD-PhD



# Ambizione



## Aim

- Create conditions for starting an independent career in Switzerland

## Requirements

- Postdoctoral research activities of at least 12 months at a different university from that of the dissertation
- PhD: up to 4 years after the doctoral exam
- MD: at least 3 years of postgraduate clinical activity; up to 9 years after the medical license

## Objective requirements

- Medical researchers doing clinical work: 80 – 90% project and training related to the project, minimum 10% clinical activities



# Ambizione



## Duration

- 4 years (no follow-up grants)

## Eligible costs

- **Ambizione grant:** salary of grantee and project funds
- **Ambizione project grant:** only project funds
- Project funds (team/personnel, equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)
- Candidates with sufficient experience may apply for a PhD student

## Contribution

- (Salary)
- Project funds: max. CHF 400'000 for 4 years

## Submission deadline

- 13 January 2017

more info: [ambizione@snf.ch](mailto:ambizione@snf.ch)



# SNSF professorships



## Aim

- Enable junior researchers with several years of recognised research experience to establish an independent research team

## Requirements

- Postdoctoral research experience of at least 24 months at a different university from that of the dissertation; at least 12 months abroad
- PhD/MD: up to 9 years after doctoral exam
- MD: postgraduate clinical and research activity
- Swiss university degree or at least 2 years of research activity in Switzerland

## Objective requirements

- At least 80% research and further scientific education; 20% teaching
- Medical researchers doing clinical work: at least 50% research and training related to the project; up to 50% clinical activities



# SNSF professorships



## **Duration**

- 4 years (follow-up grants up to 2 years possible)

## **Eligible costs**

- Own salary (assistant professor level)
- Project funds (team/personnel, equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)
- Contribution to the infrastructure of the host institution

## **Contribution**

- Max. CHF 1'600'000 for 4 years

## **Submission deadline**

- 1 May 2017

More info: [snfprof@snf.ch](mailto:snfprof@snf.ch)



## Klinische Forschung aus Sicht des SNF



## Clinical Research – main success factors

- specialised infrastructures and infrastructure networks
- multicentric studies and coordination
- training and standards - study design, GCP, statistics
- high data quality, data accessibility
- young clinician investigators
- time for research studies





## SNSF action plan since 2004 (1)

„Competence Centre Switzerland“ for clinical research

### Infrastructures

- multicentric cohort studies
- network of non-pathology oriented clinical trial units
- Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation (ECRIN)
- Swiss Biobanking Platform (BBMRI)



## SNSF action plan since 2004

„Competence Centre Switzerland“ for clinical research

- Project and Career Funding
- MDPHD stipends, Fellowships for young advanced clinical researchers, SNSF Clinical Professorships
- Protected research time for young clinicians
- **Special Programme IICT (investigator initiated clinical trials)**
- Special Programme University Medicine (translational research projects conducted by young clinicians)



## Investigator Initiated Clinical Trials (IICT) program





## IICT scope / limitations

The IICT call is limited to

- prospective
- randomised
- controlled
- interventional
- multicentric studies of
- new or existing treatments on
- topics that are not in the industry focus and therefore insufficiently researched



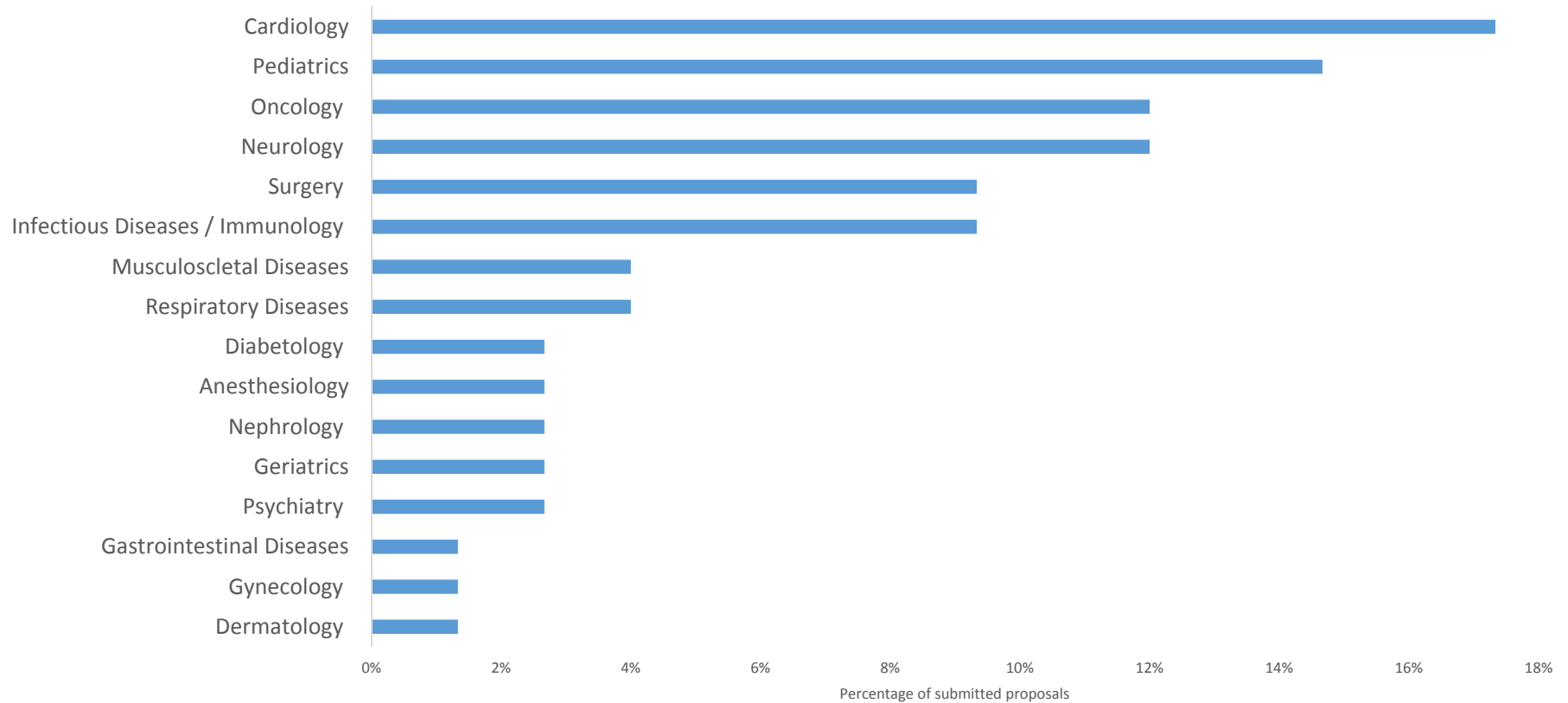
## IICT scope / limitations

No funding is awarded for

- pilot studies
- proof of concept studies
- phase I and phase IIa pharmaceutical studies
- translational studies
- observational studies
- studies involving healthy subjects
- physiological or pathophysiological studies of patients
- technology development for new treatments
- development and evaluation of new diagnostic or risk-stratified procedures without a therapy



# IICT call 2015: review / statistics



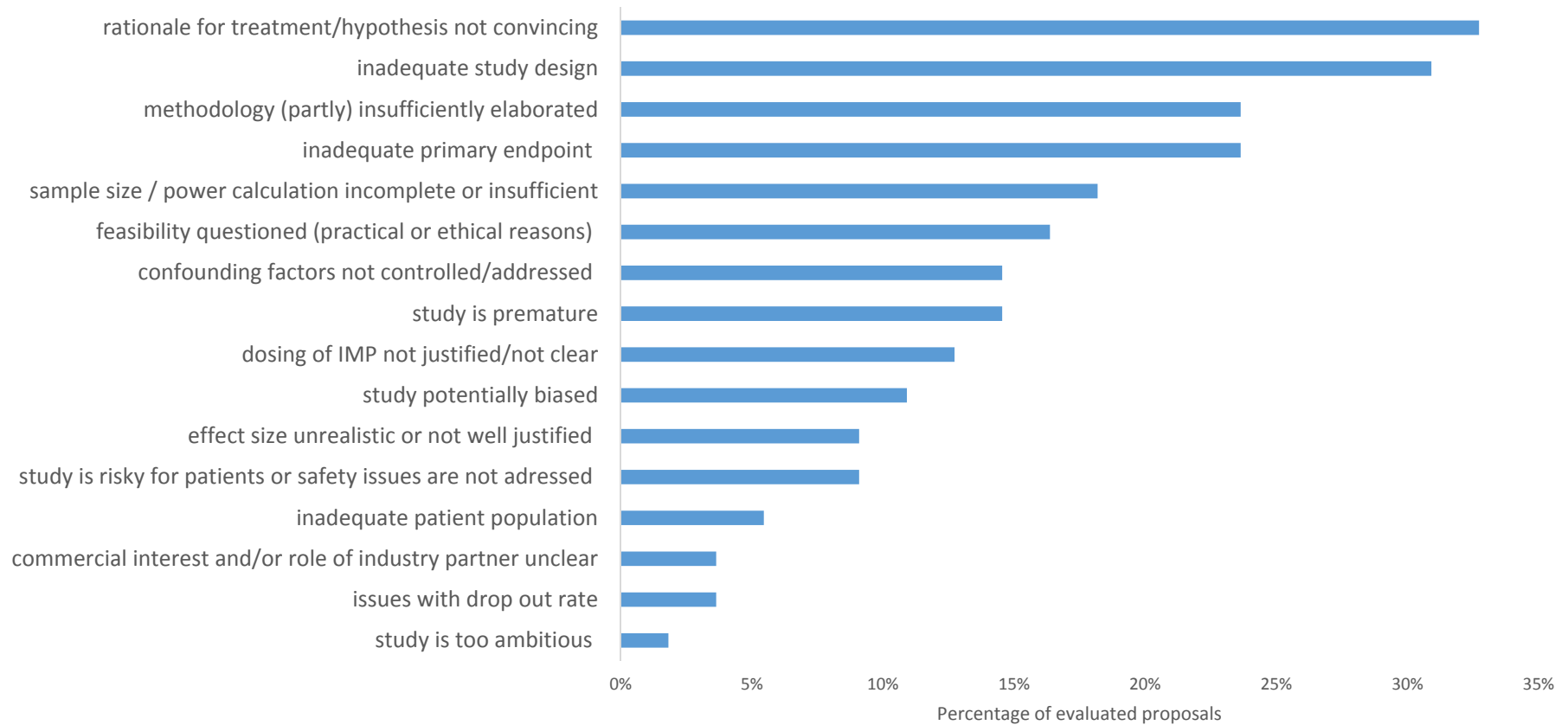


## Applications outside IICT scope

Reason for non-consideration decision	Number of proposals
Trial is not randomised	9%
Requested study duration is too long	3%
Application for an observational study	5%
Application for an exploratory study	4%
Origin of study is outside Switzerland	3%
Application for technology development of a novel treatment	3%
No intervention in patients	3%
Unjustified single-centre study	1%
Late resubmission of required documents	1%



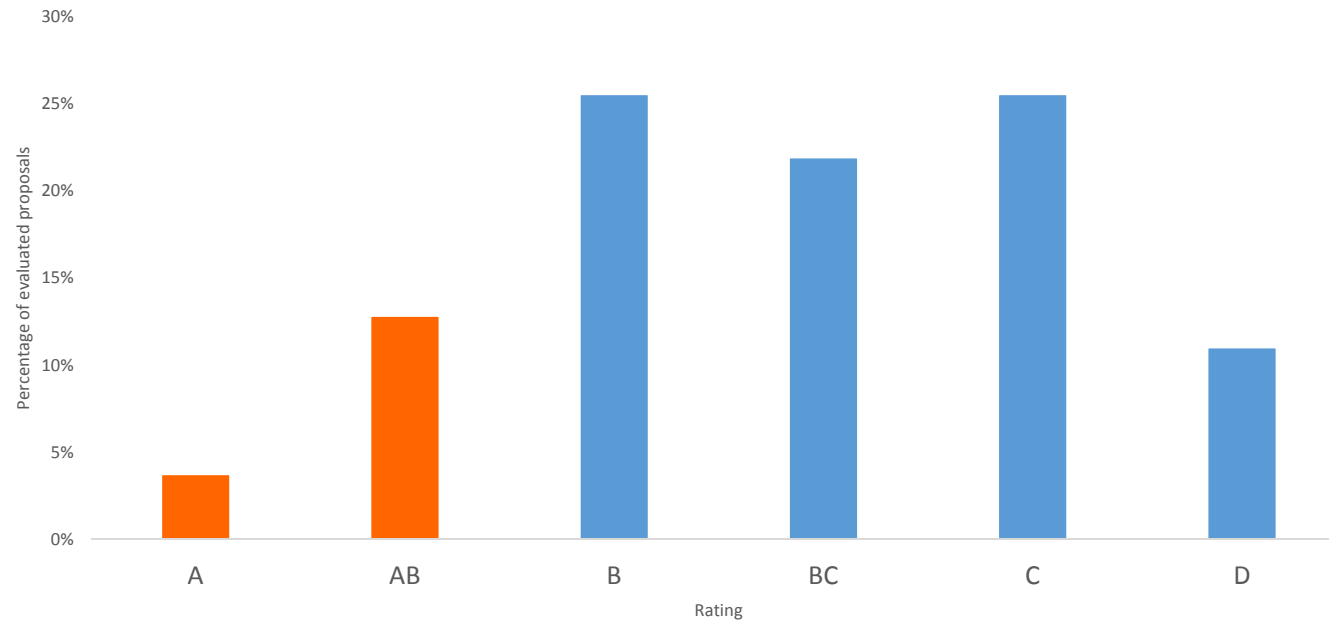
# Weakness of evaluated proposals







# Funding decision



Funding of CHF 12.6 million for 9 clinical studies

# IICT 2015: collaborations





- Auswahlhilfe  
Förderungsinstrument
- Direkteinstieg
- Projekte
- Karrieren
- Programme
  - › NFP
  - › NFS
  - › Sinergia -  
interdisziplinär,  
kollaborativ,  
bahnbrechend
  - › Temporäre ERC-  
Ersatzmassnahmen
  - › Longitudinalstudien
  - › Scopes
  - › Erweiterungsbeiträge
  - › r4d-Programm
  - › Bilaterale Programme
  - › ERA-NET
  - › precOR
  - › **IICT**
  - › PIRE
  - › BRIDGE
  - › COST
- Infrastrukturen
- Wissenschafts-  
kommunikation
- Ergänzende  
Massnahmen
- Ausschreibungen
- How To
- Dokumente &  
Downloads
- Ehemalige  
Förderungsinstrumente

## Investigator Initiated Clinical Trials (IICT)



### Unterstützung für unabhängige klinische Studien

Das Programm IICT richtet sich an Forschende, welche eine industrieunabhängige Prüfer-initiierte klinische Studie durchführen möchten. Unterstützt werden Studien zu Themen, welche nicht im Fokus der Industrie stehen und deshalb nur unzureichend erforscht werden.

Die Ausschreibungen erfolgen jährlich.

**Details** 

**Teilnahmebedingungen** 

**How To** 

**Dokumente** 

**Ergänzende Massnahmen** 

**News** 

### Auswertung der ersten IICT-Ausschreibung

20.10.2016

### Termine

Mai 2017: Kommunikation  
der Förderentscheide der  
zweiten Ausschreibung

Juni 2017: Vorankündigung  
der dritten Ausschreibung

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## Clinical studies : in general

The following information should be included in the research plan:

- **Study design**
- **Intervention**
- **Outcomes**
- **Statistical methods**
- **Sample size calculation** (based on pilot data)
- **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**
- **Recruitment** (information which allow to assess the feasibility of recruitment)
- **Recruitment plan**

-> use the competence of your local CTU



# Thank you!

Any questions? Don't hesitate to contact the SNSF Office.

[www.snf.ch](http://www.snf.ch)

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