Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships for Foreign Students at Swiss Higher Education Institutions

Each year the Swiss Confederation awards Government Excellence Scholarships to promote international exchange and research cooperation between Switzerland and over 180 other countries. Recipients are selected by the awarding body, the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS). The Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships are aimed at young researchers from abroad who have completed a master’s degree or PhD and at foreign artists holding a bachelor’s degree (for South African citizens the artist scholarship is not applicable).

For South African citizens three different types of scholarships are offered starting in September 2020:

1) Postdoctoral Scholarships
   - The Scholarship is intended for highly qualified postdoctoral researchers from all academic fields.
   - The applicants should have a PhD degree.
   - The scholarship is valid for 12 months and renewable for a maximum of 6 months.
   - Applicants should have a letter from a Professor from the Swiss host institution stating that he/she is willing to supervise the postdoctoral research
   - Applicants must submit a research proposal including a timeframe
   - There cannot be a gap of more than 5 years between the award of the PhD and the application deadline

2) Research Scholarships
   - The Scholarship is intended for highly qualified postdoctoral researchers from all academic fields as well as young Medical Doctors.
   - The scholarship is valid for 12 months maximum and non-renewable.
   - The applicant should have a Master’s degree or equivalent
   - Applicants should have a letter from a Professor from the Swiss host institution stating that he/she is willing to supervise the research
   - Applicants must submit a research proposal including a timeframe
   - The applicant must not be older than 35 years at the time of application

The FCS assesses scholarship applications according to three criteria

a) Candidate profile
b) Quality of the research project or artistic work
c) Synergies and potential for future research cooperation

Funding from the Swiss Confederation

- Tuition fee
- Scholarship amount (depending on scholarship)
  o Postdoctoral research: CHF 3500/month
  o PhD and Research scholarship: CHF 1920/month
- Mandatory Swiss health insurance
- One-time lump sum of CHF 300.-with the first grant payment to help for payment of the housing deposit.

The following website provides all necessary information on the scholarships:
www.sbfi.admin.ch/scholarships_eng

The complete applications must be submitted to the respective Swiss Embassy of the person’s nationality. For South African citizens 2 sets of documents shall be submitted to the Embassy of Switzerland to South Africa in Pretoria until 15 December 2019. Questions may be directed to: pretoria@eda.admin.ch
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DOWNLOADS

Application guidelines for the Academic Year 2020-2021

Application form 2020-2021

Application research proposal 2020-2021

Recommendation letter template

Medical certificate form

Will you be my supervisor?