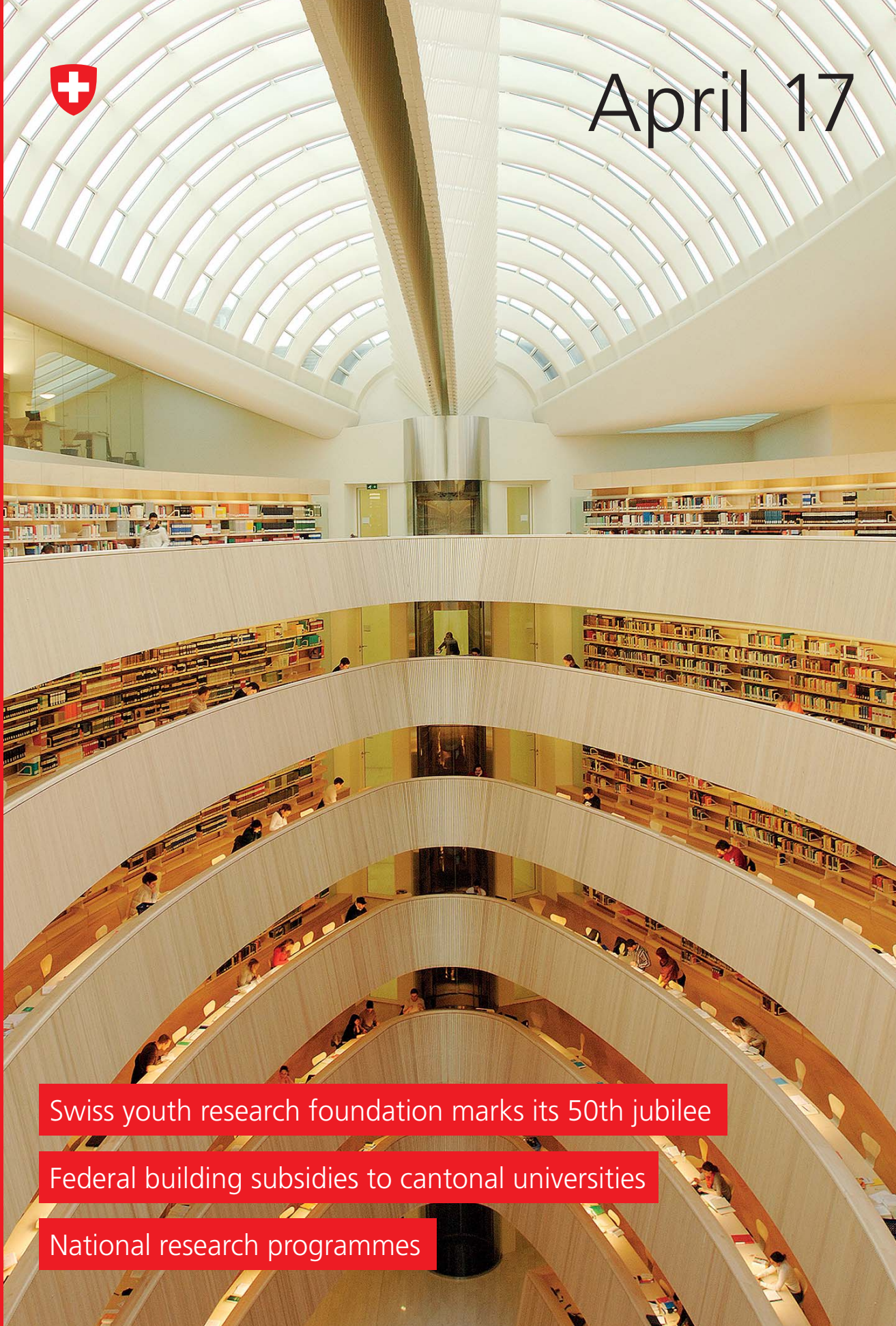


SBFI NEWS SERI

Information from State
Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI



April 17



Swiss youth research foundation marks its 50th jubilee

Federal building subsidies to cantonal universities

National research programmes



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
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**State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI**

Swiss Confederation

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Cover photo:

Between 1970 and 2016, the Confederation allocated a total of CHF 4.75 billion in real terms in federal building subsidies to cantonal universities (see subsidies on pages 7–8). Federally subsidised projects include the library of the Faculty of Law at the University of Zurich, which was built by the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. Photo: © University of Zurich, Frank Brüderli

IMPRESSUM

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Dear Reader



Perceived as both a challenge and an opportunity, the advance of digitalisation is the topic of the hour. Indeed, it affects so many different areas that questions have been raised as to whether changes to labour law and taxation law are required. At the same time, digitalisation allows us to critically examine the future viability of existing infrastructures.

And, of course, education cannot be left out of this discussion: what skills does an individual need in today's increasingly digital world? What workers with what skills are needed in tomorrow's economy?

Can the Swiss VPET system rise up to the challenge? Switzerland's measurable success as demonstrated by measurable indicators has been met with wonder at the international level. At the same time, Switzerland is a model in terms of its proven capacity to adapt.

This adaptability has mostly been possible as a result of two factors: first the considerable freedom of action given to higher education institutions, which are able to direct their research and plan their own future. This is now also the case for universities of applied sciences. Under the Higher Education Act (HEdA), they no longer have to go through a procedure to obtain approval from the Confederation for each and every study programme; the second factor is the prevalence of dual-track VET programmes, which are designed by professional organisations and therefore directly correlated with actual working activities. This greatly facilitates change management both on a qualitative and quantitative level.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether digitalisation will bring about a change in paradigm and whether this self-regulating range of systemic instruments is still adequate. While we do not have the answers to these questions, lack of certainty in itself should not be taken as sufficient grounds for making pre-emptive changes to the system. For example, the renewed discussions on whether quotas should be introduced to increase (or limit) the number of young people enrolling in vocational or general education pathways is unlikely to be settled anytime soon.

When the Federal Council formulates its policy this summer on how to address digitalisation, it will include education in its deliberations. Here, the main focus will be placed on supportive measures, i.e. measures that can be taken to build on the proven strengths of the system.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mauro Dell'Ambrogio'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and 'D'.

Mauro Dell'Ambrogio
State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI

Schweizer Jugend forscht foundation marks its 50th jubilee

‘Switzerland needs hard-working and innovative young people’

Curiosity, creativity and innovation are essential attributes for our country to be able to survive long-term in the face of global competition. And it is important to arouse interest in research at a young age. This is the aim of the SJf, the Schweizer Jugend forscht foundation. Since 1967 it has been giving young people the opportunity to get involved in science and take part in research competitions. For Ralph Eichler, the foundation president, SJf’s task is to recognise and foster talented young people, and encourage them to work independently.



Ralph Eichler, President of the Schweizer Jugend forscht Foundation. Bild: zVg

You are a former president of the ETH Zurich. What moved you to take on the presidency of the SJf?

Ralph Eichler: I took part in the first National Competition in 1967, from which I benefited enormously. Now I would like to give something back. Besides, many of those who take part in the competition go on to study at one of the federal institutes of technology (FITs). So you could say that I now simply have a younger target group.

How can young people be encouraged to take an interest in science and technology?

We run study weeks during which young people have a chance to experience science and technology personally. Starting with kids@science, girls and boys in separate groups can do simple experiments at a cantonal university, FIT or university of applied sciences; older kids can take part in a science project at a private or university research institute. Former participants in SJf events, our alumni, are also important role models.

What are SJf’s main activities?

SJf operates in three main areas. We run the study weeks, as already mentioned; then there is the National Competition, which involves a selection process, allocation of coaches, a workshop and the awards ceremony; and lastly, we run the Swiss Talent Forum, at which competition winners from all over Europe and promising young scientists from this country work together in groups on a topic of relevance to society.

What are SJf’s long-term objectives?

SJf identifies talented young people and encourages them to work independently. We want all the different parts of the country to benefit equally from our activities in the future. We also aim to motivate more young people doing vocational qualifications to take part.

What were the highlights of your jubilee year? What are the key messages you would like to send?

Switzerland needs hard-working, innovative young people. The aim of our alumni network is to motivate those who have

Federal support for SJf

Promoting young scientists is a key focus of the federal governments policy to promote education, research and innovation in the years 2017 to 2020. As part of this programme, SERI supports specific players such as the SJf Foundation. It is making it easier for young people in Switzerland to take part in international platforms, where they can meet and discuss with their peers current research issues such as digitalisation thus stimulating their interest in scientific questions and cross-border cooperation.

previously taken part in SJf’s activities to act as ambassadors, helpers or donors, and so to serve our country.

Contact

Schweizer Jugend forscht Foundation
www.sjf.ch

Benedikt Hauser, SERI
Deputy Head, Cooperation in Education
☎ +41 58 462 68 32
✉ benedikt.hauser@sbfi.admin.ch

Further information

The Schweizer Jugend forscht Foundation is celebrating its 50th jubilee from 22-29 April 2017 in Bern. There is a varied programme of events and activities, including:

- a Science Day (22 April, Turnhalle), showing that science is not at all dry and boring – anything but!
- the Science Bus (24 and 26 April, Waisenhausplatz), where members of the public can experiment with scientists from the EPF Lausanne on a solar technology project.
- a public display of research projects (28 and 29 April, Kursaal) showing the creative work done for SJf’s National Competition

The complete anniversary week programme can be found at:

🔗 <http://50jahresjf.ch>

The very first winners



SJf has drawn up a series of portraits on former participants in the National Competition, including on Professor emeritus Rosmarie Honegger, who won the National Competition in 1967.

Lichens have always fascinated me, ever since I was a child. These strange crosses between fungus and algae appear in many shapes and colours in Oberdiessbach near Thun, where I grew up. From a young age I wanted to study biology, but my parents wouldn't let me. Instead I was allowed to train to be a teacher, and so I was able to delve into the world of lichens for my final dissertation – on the way many lichens react sensitively to air pollution. It was my teacher who suggested I submit my dissertation to SJf.

I never dreamt that I would win first place. And I certainly never dreamt that I might win the international contest in the USA. It was like a fairy tale. At the contest, I met Professor Adolf Portmann, the founder of SJf. He encouraged me to do a degree in Biology, despite the fact that I didn't have an academic baccalaureate (a school-leaving certificate needed in Switzerland to enrol in university), and he was probably the anonymous sponsor of my first year at university. That really was the best way to promote young people in science.

Rosmarie Honegger studied biology and in 1976 obtained her PhD, using an electron microscopic to study lichens. After this, she was offered a permanent position at the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology at the University of Zurich, where she pursued her research into lichens and other fungus-plant interactions. She also became more and more involved in teaching. Today she is professor emeritus at the University of Zurich. In the picture below she is holding a copy of the Schweizer Illustrierte, which reported on her trip to America as a young woman. Image and text: SJf

Introduction of subject-based funding within the professional education sector

Federal Council launches consultation process

Starting in 2018, those who complete preparatory courses for federal professional examinations may apply for uniform federal subsidies. With this measure, the Confederation is strengthening its support for federal professional examinations. The new subject-based subsidy will be paid directly to those who take the federal professional examination after completing an eligible preparatory course. In February 2017, the Federal Council submitted a consultation draft on financial support for professional education. The consultation process will continue until the end of May.

Funding of professional education will be shouldered both by the private and public sectors. Most of the funding provided for preparatory courses for federal professional examinations will come from employers and the examination candidates themselves.

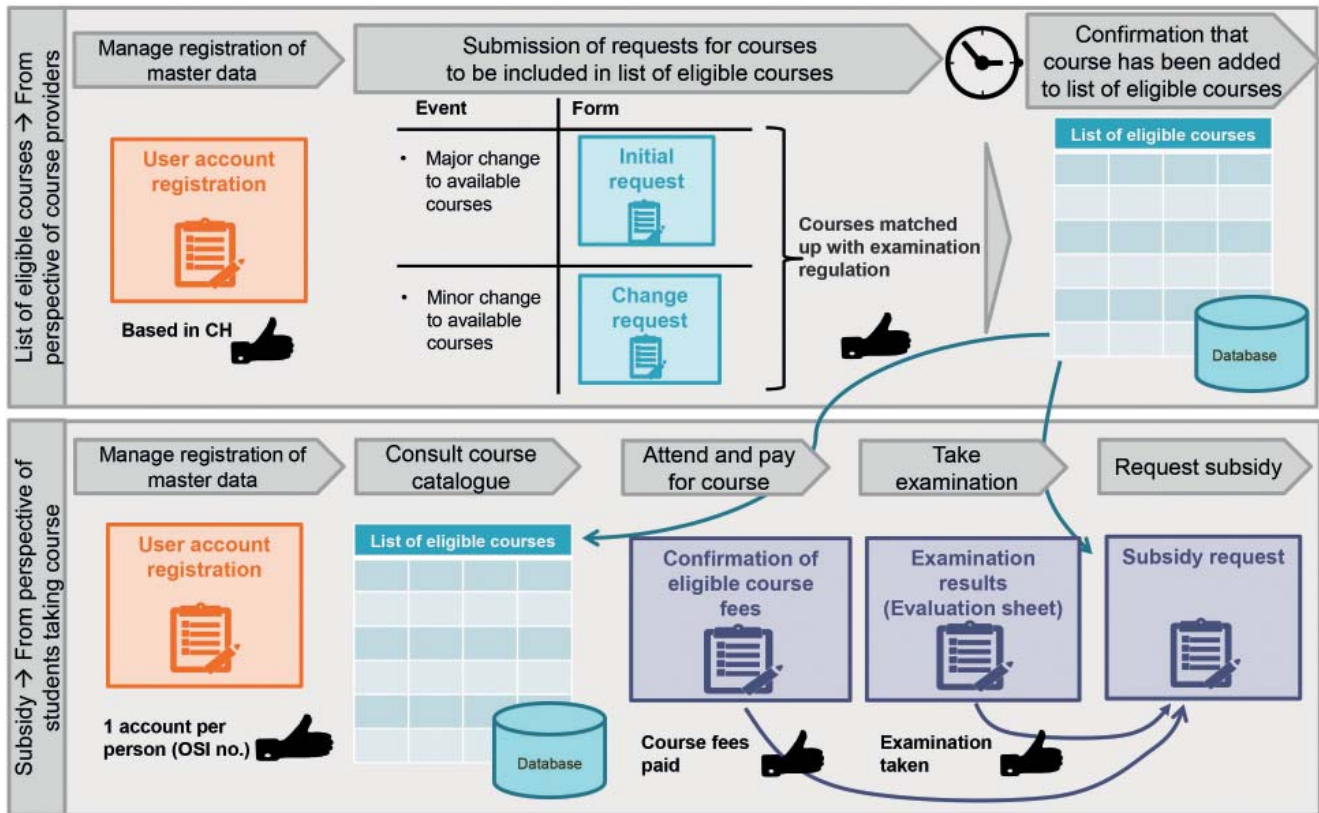
While the Confederation pays 60% to 80% of the costs of conducting federal professional examinations, preparatory courses for these examinations are only partially subsidised by the cantons. In contrast, the Swiss higher education sector (universities of applied sciences, cantonal universities) is mostly funded by the public sector.

A more balanced distribution of financial burden at tertiary level

With the new subject-based funding system, the Confederation will increase the level of funding that it provides to the cantons. The new subject-based subsidy will be paid directly to those who take the federal professional examination after completing an eligible preparatory course. This measure is intended to achieve a more equitable distribution of financial burden for individuals pursuing either professional education or higher education, thereby enhancing the appeal of federal professional examinations and helping to tap domestic workforce potential (Skilled Workers Initiative).

The introduction of the new funding system meant amendments had to be made to the Federal Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act (VPETA). The revised draft of VPETA was adopted by the Parliament in December 2016. Parliament revised the original proposal made by the Federal Council (i.e. paying the subject-based federal subsidy after completion of an eligible preparatory course) by adding an additional feature: giving candidates the option of requesting partial advance payments of the federal subsidy before taking the federal professional examination. The implementing provisions are set out in the Vocational and Professional Education and Training Ordinance (VPETO). The

Structure of subject-based funding as seen from the perspective of course providers and students taking preparatory courses for federal professional examinations



The list for eligible courses is a key element of the new system that will be used to fund preparatory courses for federal professional examinations. Candidates may claim the federal subsidy after they have paid the course fees and taken the examination – whether they pass or fail – provided that they attend one of the eligible preparatory courses listed. Chart: SERI, Last update: March 2017

revised draft of VPETO is currently going through the consultation process.

Key figures in subject-based funding

- Contribution rate: the contribution rate for eligible course fees (max. 50%) will be established by the Federal Council in VPETO. The final decision is expected in the autumn.
- Maximum threshold: when calculating the federal subsidy, an upper threshold will be set for federal professional examinations. This maximum threshold will be set out in VPETO. It is expected to be CHF 19,000 for the lower and CHF 21,000 for the higher of the two federal professional examinations. This should cover the vast majority of all known course fees found on the market. The definitive decision is expected to be reached in the autumn of 2017.
- Subsidy linked to the federal professional examination: payment of the federal subsidy is dependent on whether the candidate takes the examination, regardless of whether the person pass-

es or fails. This requirement is what distinguishes the funding of federal professional examinations from that of job-related continuing education and training (which can also be part of preparatory courses). In other words, the subsidy will be paid after the fact, once the candidate has taken the federal examination. In exceptional cases, candidates facing financial difficulties may request partial advance funding of the federal subsidy if they do not already receive funding from their employer, a trade association, cantonal authority or third party

- Commencement: the new funding scheme should come into effect on 1 January 2018. Residents of Switzerland who complete preparatory courses for a federal professional examination after 1 January 2018, may apply for a federal subsidy – regardless of whether they pass or fail. The following criteria must be met: the preparatory course in question must be listed in SERI's list of eligible courses; these courses must

start after 1 January 2017; and the applicant cannot already be a recipient of a cantonal subsidy by virtue of the Intercantonal Agreement on Funding Contributions for Study Programmes at Professional Education Institutions (HFSV).

Contact

Rémy Hübschi, SERI
 Head of Professional Education Division
 ☎ +41 58 462 21 27
 ✉ remy.huebschi@sbfi.admin.ch

Further information

🌐 www.sbfi.admin.ch/hbbfinanzierung
 SERI will present the consultation draft at the Stade de Suisse in Bern on 27 April from 9.30 – 12.00. This event is intended for all sponsors of federal professional examinations, institutions that prepare candidates for these examinations and other interested parties. Registration:
 🌐 www.sbfi.admin.ch/infobbv

Federal building subsidies to cantonal universities, 1970-2016

Optimal infrastructure enables excellence in teaching and research

Between 1970 und 2016, the Confederation provided a total of CHF 4.75 billion in real terms building subsidies to cantonal universities. These building subsidies were used to acquire, build and renovate buildings or to purchase and install research equipment and computer hardware. Since 2017, payment of these federal building subsidies is subject to the provisions of the Higher Education Act (HEdA).



The last major construction project that is still federally subsidised under previous legislation, is the renovation of the Biocentre of the University of Basel. The new building should be completed in 2018. Photo: ilg santer architekten, zürich

After over hundred years of wrestling back and forth, a legal basis for long-term federal funding of Swiss universities was finally adopted: the Federal Act of 28 June 1968 on Higher Education Funding. Coming into effect in 1969, the new act provided for two types of federal subsidies:

- Basic operating subsidy to cover university activities and
- Building subsidy to be used for construction projects on university campuses as well as to purchase research equipment and furniture, expand libraries and pay leases.

When the act was revised in 1991, the portion of the building subsidy earmarked for payment of leases was replaced by a subsidy for computer hardware. Until the Higher Education Funding Act was replaced by the University Funding Act in 1999, the Confederation also used to provide funding to maintain student housing.

Over 8,000 funding commitments made

Between 1970 and 2016, Parliament allocated a total of CHF 4.02 billion (CHF 4.75 billion in real terms) in funding to cover these commitments, generally in four-year budget periods. Of the total of 8,155 funding commitments made, the Canton of Bern, the Canton of Geneva and the the Canton of Zurich each received over 1,000.

One of the first major construction projects, for which the Confederation pledged over CHF 19 million in July 1970, was one submitted by the Canton of Bern. It concerned the construction of the Chemistry Institute in Länggasse. In 1974, other major construction projects in the Canton of Basel and the Canton of Zurich would follow. Eventually, the Canton of Geneva and the Canton of Neuchatel submitted their own projects to secure federal funding.

Major projects that received federal subsidies under the Higher Education Funding Act include the following:

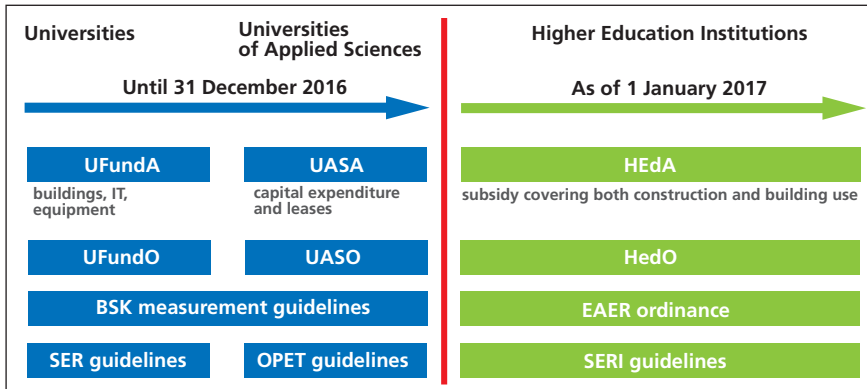
- University of Basel Faculty of Medicine, third expansion phase, new construction of Clinic 2, surroundings and connection, federal subsidy of CHF 40 million (1974).
- Partial move of the University of Zurich campus to the Strickhofareal, 1st phase of construction, federal subsidy of CHF 140 million (1974). The 2nd, 3rd and 4th phases of construction followed, with total federal subsidy of CHF 151 million (1980–2000). Currently the project is in the 5th phase of construction, with a federal subsidy of CHF 32 million (2016).
- University of Neuchâtel, Institute of Mathematic and Information Technology, Institute of Geology, Institute of Botany, Institute of Zoology and the Computing Centre: Restructuring of buildings of the Faculty of Science (UNIMAIL), federal subsidy of CHF 64 million (1991).
- University of Geneva, University Medical Centre (CMU), 1st–6th phases, federal subsidy of CHF 227 million (1974–2015).

The most recent major construction project was submitted by the Canton of Basel. This project is for the renovation of the Biocentre on Spitalstrasse 41, with a federal subsidy of CHF 68 million (2013). Renovation work should be completed in 2018.

Building usage now included in federal building subsidy

Starting in 2017, cantonal universities, universities of applied sciences and other institutions within the higher education sector will now receive harmonised federal building subsidies under

Federal building subsidies (previously also covering leases) paid to cantonal universities and universities of applied sciences



UFundA: University Funding Act / UFundO: University Funding Ordinance / UASA: Universities of Applied Sciences Act UAS Act / UASO: UAS Ordinance / BSK: Swiss Conference on Building Subsidies / SER: State Secretariat for Education and Research / OPET: Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology. Picture: SERI

Federal building subsidies to universities of applied sciences, 2004-2016

Under the UAS Act, universities of applied sciences used to receive federal funding in the form of a basic operational subsidy and a building subsidy. The Confederation paid one-third of the eligible building expenditure. From 2004 to 2016, the Confederation allocated a total of CHF 405.8 million in building subsidies to universities of applied sciences. In addition, the Swiss Parliament approved an additional budgetary allocation of CHF 85 million (until the end of 2020).

the terms of the Higher Education Act (HEdA). These building subsidies will be paid in addition to the current basic operating subsidy and project subsidies.

Building subsidies have been expanded to include building usage – which is a novelty for cantonal universities. This makes it possible to support short-term needs for space in rental properties. A CHF 5 million lower threshold has been set in order for construction projects to be deemed eligible for a federal building subsidy. In addition, funding for construction projects and building usage are subject to the separation of powers and require

cooperation between higher education institutions.

Under HEdA, building subsidies are provided for the acquisition, long-term use, creation or transformation of buildings used for teaching, research or other higher education activities. The EAER Ordinance of 23 November 2016 on Contributions to Expenditure on the Construction and Use of University Buildings (UBCUCA, SR 414.201.1) sets out the individual details on how eligible expenditure is calculated, the requirements that must be met to qualify for a federal building subsidy and the application procedure. On 1 January,

SERI drafted corresponding guidelines on UBCUCA.

Contact

Urs Zemp, SERI
 Head of Higher Education Facilities
 ☎ +41 58 462 76 30
 ✉ urs.zemp@sbfi.admin.ch

Further information

Information on federal building subsidies (incl. legal basis, forms, etc.)
 🌐 www.sbfi.admin.ch/beitraege_ufg_fhsg



One of the largest federally subsidised construction projects under the Higher Education Funding Act was the partial transfer of the University of Zurich campus to the Strickhofareal in the 1970s. The Irchel campus of the University of Zurich now stands on what used to be the Strickhof Agricultural School. Photo: ETH Zurich Library, Photo archive/Photographer: Comet Photo AG

National research programmes

An established funding instrument

National research programmes (NRPs) initiate and conduct coordinated research projects with a common goal. NRPs were introduced in 1974 and have subsequently become established as an important tool in federal research funding. In February, the Federal Council launched the 76th NRP on welfare and coercion. In March, the government also acknowledged the five recently concluded NRPs.



Urban sprawl can only be restricted by raising density levels in building use. The findings of the New Urban Quality National Research Programme (NRP 65) demonstrate ways to transform agglomerations into urbanised neighbourhoods and districts. Constructional development in Switzerland's town and cities should lead to a higher quality of life and greater efficiency.

The vision developed for Giubiasco, a suburb of Bellinzona, in 2020–2030 shows how an agglomeration can be urbanised. Key features of this project are: buildings facing onto public areas (eg parks, streets), mixed commercial and residential areas and the redevelopment of industrial areas. Everything is being done to ensure that no agricultural land is re-zoned. Photo: © Accademia di architettura di Mendrisio/USI

Important contributions to the effects and consequences of welfare and coercion in Switzerland are expected from the latest NRP: Welfare and coercion - past, present, future. Regulatory measures against minors and adults – compulsory social measures and placements – took place before 1981 in the state welfare and guardianship system. In this system, different practices were applied in the different cantons, and there was no real system of procedural law. The measures frequently resulted in the personal integrity of those concerned being abused.

The new NRP aims to scientifically analyse the characteristics, mechanisms and impacts of Swiss welfare policies and practices in a broad context. The new NRP will examine the social impacts and consequences of care and coercion – including for those concerned by non-administrative measures – from a current and an historical perspective, in order to

generate new findings. Research will also focus on the federal requirements and differences in welfare practices, looking at the respective legal bases, procedures, administrative and judicial responsibilities and the legal remedies available to those affected.

The research is divided into the following main areas:

- **Fundamental rights and state action:** this sub-topic focuses on the conflict between the need for order as perceived by government and society on the one hand, and on respecting personality rights on the other.
- **Federal structure and economic factors:** This area focuses on the federal requirements and differences in welfare practice.
- **Impact on persons concerned:** The focus here is on the experiences and long-term consequences of care and coercion measures.

- **Discourse and its effects:** Care and coercion are issues embedded in a time-specific discourse on norms and values in society. This area looks at the reconstruction and analysis of this discourse.
- **Stabilising and dynamic factors:** This area focuses on institutional change in Swiss welfare policies and practices.

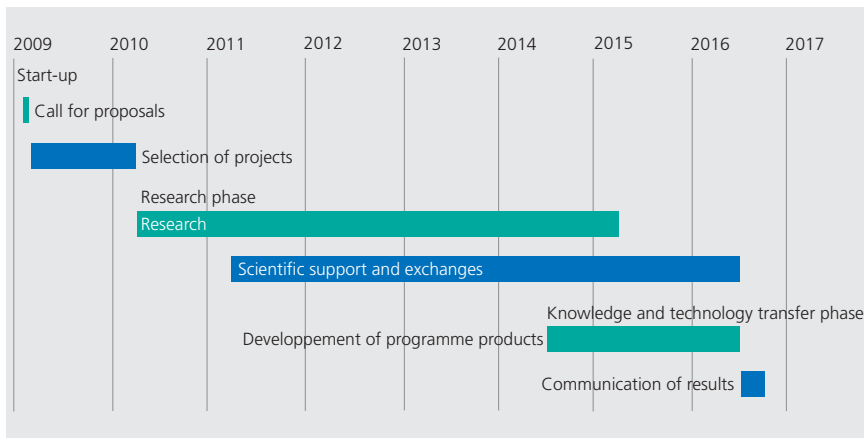
The NRP complements the work of the independent expert commission on Administrative Care set up by the Federal Council in 2014, which primarily examines the history of administrative care. The findings from the NRP are to be used to further develop current welfare practices, welfare legislation, administrative organisation and the system of funding official measures. The programme will run for five years and has a budget of CHF 18 million.

Five NRP final reports now published

In 2007, the Federal Council approved the national research programmes Gender Equality (NRP 60), Sustainable Water Management (NRP 61), Smart Materials (NRP 62), Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine (NRP 63) and New Urban Quality (NRP 65). The SNSF carried out these programmes and has written final reports for the Federal Council. It gives a positive global assessment of the five NRPs in terms of both the scientific quality of the research carried out and objectives attained. The programmes were also successful in promoting young scientists. In their individual fields, the NRPs generated valuable inputs for all those interested in the research findings.

NRP 60 Gender Equality

The NRP concludes that equality in the sense of equal opportunity creates benefits for the economy, society and the individual. It shows that career and study choices have a major impact on a person's chances in the labour market as



NFP 63 Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine schedule. Diagram: SNSF

well as on the roles of men and women in private households. Wage inequality between men and women has an impact on gender relations beyond the labour market and contributes to the imbalance between paid employment and unpaid care work. The NRP found that measures to ensure equality between the sexes in the workplace are particularly effective if they systematically address all employees and are firmly anchored in an organisation's culture. Not only have the scientific findings and their significance for creating greater equality been discussed with representatives from politics and gender equality professionals at federal and cantonal level, they have also already been applied in a range of projects.

www.nfp60.ch

NRP 61 Sustainable water use

In this NRP, inter- and transdisciplinary project teams investigated Switzerland's water future in the 21st century. One of the findings of the NRP is that as the glaciers retreat, new lakes are created. This creates water management and tourism opportunities, but also harbours risks such as the potential for tidal waves. Switzerland is one of the first countries to develop an annotated knowledge and planning base for dealing with these new water bodies. The NRP also shows that in the Jura, on the Swiss Plateau and in the pre-Alps, socio-economic change (for example settlement development) has a greater impact than climate change on the hydrological situation. The NRP generated a wide range of scientific results and practice-oriented methods and tools for the sustainable use of water resources. The programme therefore not only attained its

scientific objectives, it also demonstrated the value of knowledge exchange as a complement to research activities.

www.nfp61.ch

NFP 62 Smart Materials

This NFP was the first to be conducted as a joint endeavour of the SNSF and the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI). It delivers new and technically sound findings about smart materials, thus providing a basis for strategies and measures for their use in products in Swiss industry. The programme produced impressive scientific results and was very valuable in training young scientists. The SNSF and CTI collaboration provided an important organisational model for the Bridge programme introduced in the 2017–2020 ERI Dispatch and run jointly by the SNSF and the CTI.

www.nfp62.ch

NFP 63 Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine

The NRP delivered a wealth of new findings on the biology of stem cells, their role in the repair of organs and potential applications in regenerative medicine. This has led to various research institutes placing a special emphasis on this topic and to new developments in training and further education. For example, some research groups have demonstrated why stem cells turn into cancer cells – one of the best-known and most adverse effects of stem cell therapy. The findings are a step on the path towards restricting this process. Another research project succeeded in producing a new biomaterial whose structure is close to that of human cartilage. The researchers are now working on using this biomaterial to reconstruct malformed

ears. The programme also resulted in the foundation of the Swiss Donor Advisory Board, which aims at improving the blood stem cell donation procedure.

www.nfp63.ch

NFP 65 New Urban Quality

The NRP generated a range of scientific results and ideas for a wide-ranging practical discussion on urban and agglomeration development in Switzerland. A broad concept of urban quality resulted from the NRP, namely, that it can be found where people have opportunities to come together, where diversity is present and where a feeling of familiarity can arise. In the NRP, new ways to generate urban quality are proposed. These present development ideas and concepts for limiting urban sprawl without inhibiting growth, as well as best practices for generating urban quality in cities and suburbs.

www.nfp65.ch

Contact

Claudine Dolt, SERI
Project manager, National Research and Innovation

[+41 58 462 78 38](tel:+41584627838)

claudine.dolt@sbfi.admin.ch

Further information

Information on the NRPs and overview of all past NRPs

www.sbfi.admin/nfp

NFP 76 Welfare and coercion – past, present and future:

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) has been commissioned to carry out this national research programme. It will launch a call for project proposals in April. Any queries concerning the submission of projects should be submitted directly to the SNSF.

Contact in Programmes Division:

Dr Stephanie Schönholzer;

[+41 31 308 22 22](tel:+41313082222)

nfp76@snf.ch

National research programmes in brief

Suitable topics for the National Research Programmes are areas in which Swiss research can provide viable solutions and which require contributions from a range of disciplines. The research should be able to produce results within approximately five years, and these results should have a practical application.

Topics for new national research programmes are selected in a bottom-up process, with interested circles submitting their proposals to SERI. Once these topics have been assessed, the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research submits its proposals to the Federal Council, which periodically selects the topics and the financial framework of new NRPs. The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is then mandated to implement the programmes. The projects subsequently submitted to the SNSF are subject to the ordinary evaluation procedure in accordance with SNSF standards.

The federal government earmarked a total of CHF 100 million for funding NRPs in the 2017–2020 funding period. At least one regular audit will be held within this period. Cooperation between the SNSF and the Commission for Technology and Innovation is now well established in the NRPs, and is to be continued on a topic basis. The SNSF will also continue to examine possible Swiss involvement in individual European joint programming initiatives in the context of ongoing or newly planned NRPs, and decide whether participation is viable given the NRP budget available.

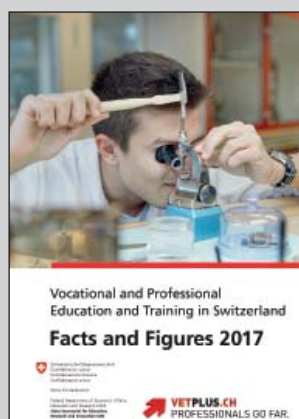
ERI news

Updated publications on Swiss VPET system and Swiss higher education and research

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has recently updated two of its information brochures.

The first publication, 'Vocational and Professional Education and Training in Switzerland – Facts and Figures 2017' provides an overview of the Swiss VPET system, the various options available at both upper-secondary and tertiary levels, the three different learning locations for VET programmes and other topics such as funding, vocational qualifications for adults, and international VET activities. This publication is available in five languages (German, French, Italian, English and Spanish)

The second publication, 'Higher Education and Research in Switzerland' provides information about Swiss activities in this area – from teaching and research to promotion of innovation. This publication also draws international comparisons and includes individual portraits of cantonal universities, federal institutes of technology and universities of applied sciences. This publication is available in three languages (German, French and English).

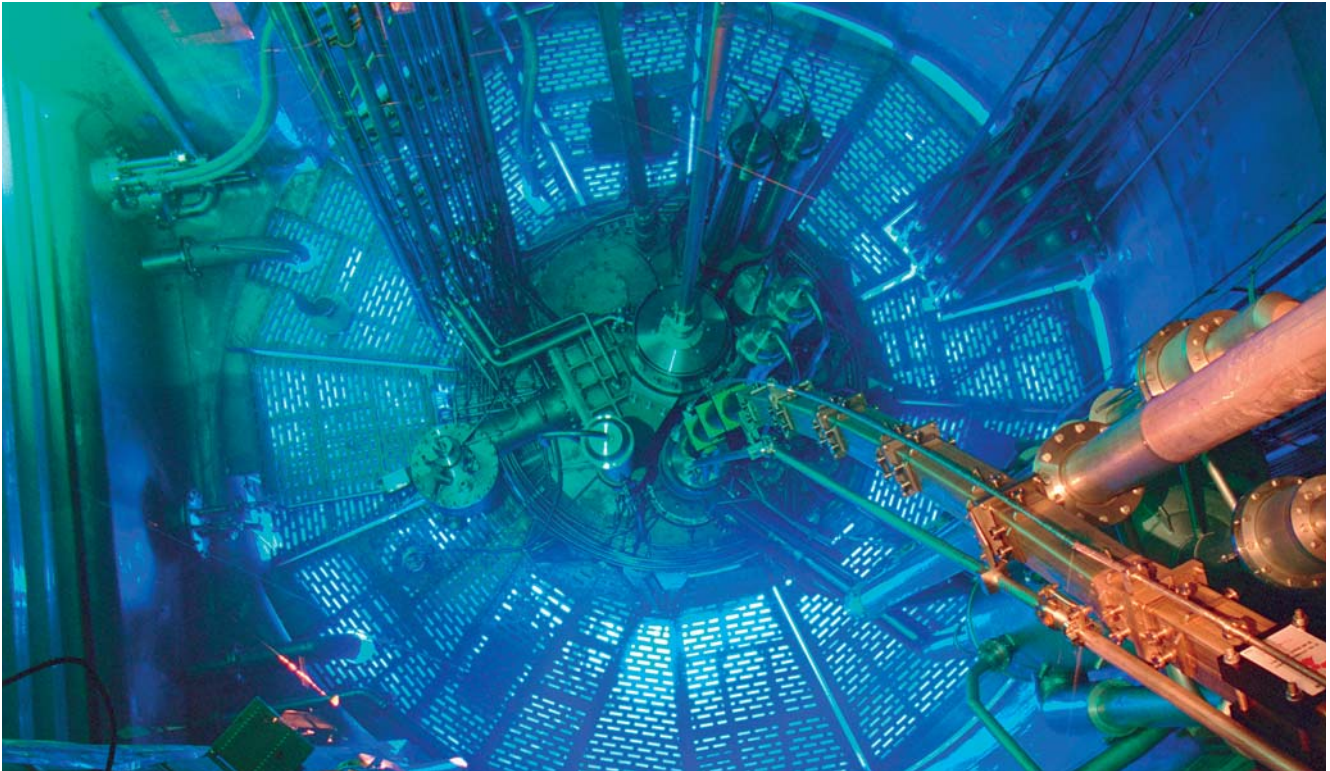


Further information

Orders of hardcopy versions: info@sbfi.admin.ch

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ERI | PHOTO OF THE MONTH



On 19 January, the Laue-Langevin Institute (ILL) celebrated 50 years of activity in Grenoble in the presence of political and scientific representatives from all over Europe. Since 1971, this prestigious international organisation has provided its users with the world's most powerful source of neutrons. Its nuclear reactor produces a very high flux of neutrons feeding some 40 state-of-the-art instruments, which are used for experiments in a wide variety of fields such as fundamental physics, matter physics, molecular biology and chemistry.

France and Germany established the ILL as both a scientific and political endeavour in 1967. Since then 13 European countries have joined the ILL. A scientific member of the ILL since 1988, Switzerland's participation is based on five-year renewable contracts. The ILL's unique characteristics offer the Swiss scientific community the possibility of conducting experiments and measurements that enhance the reputation of this exceptional institution. Photo: ILL – J.L. Baudet

Further information: www.ill.eu

The Figure



Launched in 1997, the Apprenticeship Barometer survey is conducted twice each year (April and August). The aim is to monitor and keep track of trends on the Swiss apprenticeship market. The Apprenticeship Barometer survey is conducted by the Link Institute for Marketing and Social Research (Lucerne) on behalf of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

Survey results are partly based on a written questionnaire sent out to various companies, half of which are involved in the provision of apprenticeship training. The survey results are also based on a telephone survey of young people between the ages of 14 and 20. The initial results of the April 2017 survey should be published in early June.