



**University of  
Zurich** <sup>UZH</sup>

Research Development

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# Information on the upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> Call for National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCR)

**Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Stark**, Vice President Research

**Prof. Dr. Isabelle Mansuy**, Former Member of the SNSF Research Council, Division Four



## Agenda

1. NCCR: Overall objectives and current situation
2. UZH internal selection process (Prof. Elisabeth Stark)
3. SNSF's external evaluation process (Prof. Isabelle Mansuy)
4. Questions & Answers

## NCCR: Overall objectives

- NCCRs promote long-term research networks  
...in areas of strategic importance for  
...Swiss science/ Swiss economy/ Swiss society
- They have three main distinguishing features:
  - outstanding, internationally visible research
  - knowledge and technology transfer
  - Promotion of equal opportunities and careers of young researchers
- Emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches, but also on innovative approaches within the disciplines.





## Situation

### **Announcement SNSF (June 2023): Upcoming call for new NCCR (6<sup>th</sup> series):**

- Call is expected in November 2023, with start of new NCCR during the course of 2026
- Open to all topics and disciplines
- New: Proposals for smaller and shorter NCCRs are also explicitly welcomed. Proposals with smaller consortia, smaller budgets and shorter durations can also be submitted. However, structural measures beyond the duration of the NCCR will remain important and need to be identified.



## SNSF expects from home institutions...

- Support of NCCR outline proposals only within
  - ... already existing **focal areas** (within faculty and UZH-wide) **and**
  - ... substantial **new** and **sustainable** investment in these areas.
  
- Structural measures:
  - New professorships (tenure track) within these focal areas
  - Reconstruction of existing research structures or new research structures (institutes, core facilities, Centers or other new structures across faculties, ...)
  - Focus on education (BA/MA level, PhD programs,...)

... far beyond 12 years!



## UZH internal selection process

- The **SNSF expects the home institutions to make a strategic pre-selection of projects**. To guide the pre-selection and to best coordinate NCCR proposals with the strategic planning of UZH and the involved faculties, the Executive Board of the University conducts an internal selection process **involving the faculty leaderships and a panel of selected internal experts** (Fact Sheet).
- Two steps:
  - **Rating and Ranking of project sketches** (5 pages, [template](#)) by the leading house faculty(ies) and an internal panel of experts chaired by the Vice President Research.
  - Selection of 15-20 projects for **short presentations**.
- Based on recommendations by the expert panel, the Executive Board of the University will make the final decision on which projects will be supported (usually 10-12 projects).

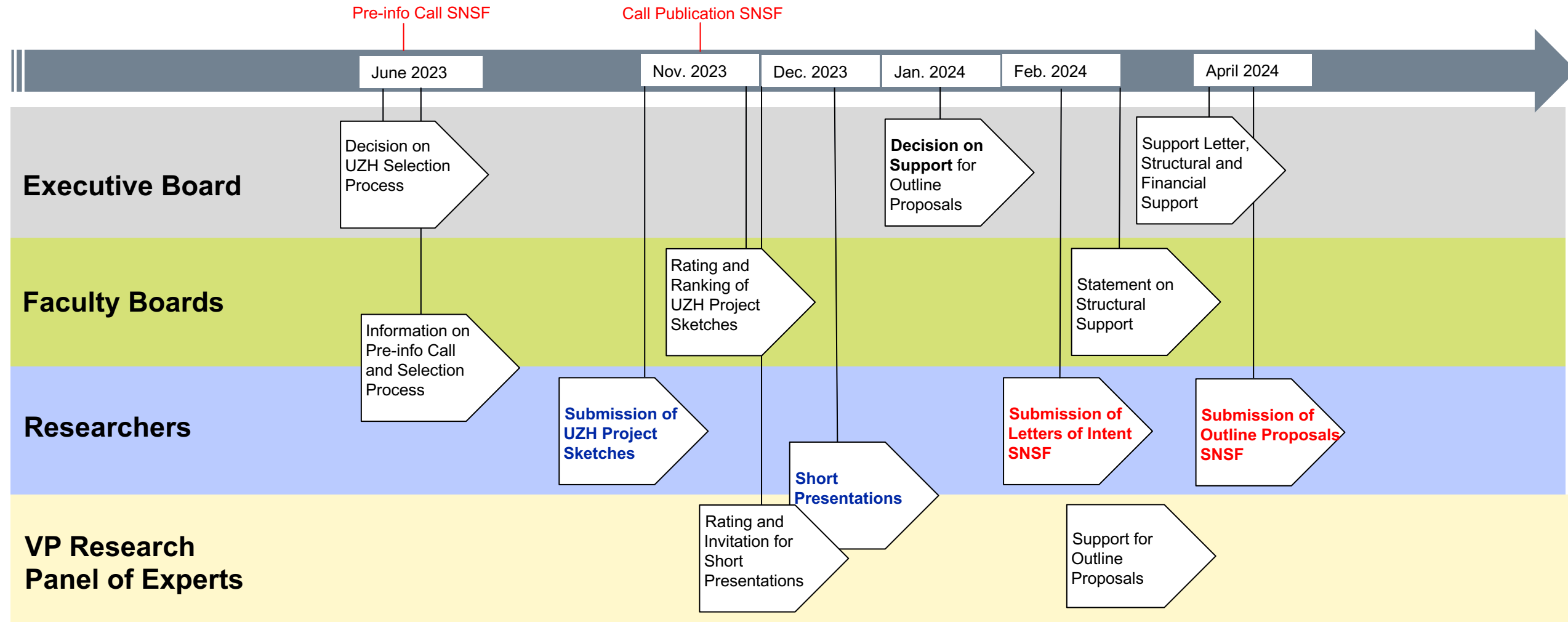


## Leading house faculty(ies)

- up to **two per proposal**
- serve as the locus of **structural change** and accommodate the **project management** personnel (ensuring the corresponding relief for the NCCR management)
- Faculties' **strategic planning** and commitment to **long-term structural support** are crucial.



# UZH internal selection process: timeline







## Important Dates

- **November 1, 2023:** Submission of project sketch to Division Research Development (maurus.bolfing@uzh.ch)
- **December 21, 2023:** Short presentations of selected projects to internal expert panel
- **February 2024:** Submission of Letters of Intent to SNSF
- **April 2024:** Submission of Outline Proposals to SNSF
- **First Quarter 2025:** Submission of Full Proposals to SNSF



## UZH internal selection process: Criteria

- **Quality of consortium**
- Relevance of research topic and **scientific quality**
- Consistency with the **strategic planning** of the leading house faculty(ies) and the UZH
- **Suitability of UZH** as home institution
- Support of **Co-Leading Houses** (if any) and partner institutions
- Unique selling point and **benchmarking** with other initiatives
- Necessity of **restructuring** the chosen research field
- **Added value** of interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation potential
- Potential in the field of **knowledge and technology transfer**



## NCCR with UZH as Leading House

- NCCR Evolving Language - ongoing
- NCCR Kidney
- NCCR Mediality
- NCCR Democracy
- NCCR FINRISK
- NCCR Neuro
- NCCR Structural Biology



National Centre of Competence in Research  
Financial Valuation and Risk Management



Complete list of ongoing and concluded NCCR [here!](#)



## Success rate of outline proposals submitted to SNSF

	<b>Submitted outline proposals</b>	<b>Submitted full proposals</b>	<b>Approved proposals</b>	<b>Years of operation</b>
5th call (2020)	54 (11 UZH)	23 (6 UZH)	6 (1 UZH)	2020-2032
4th call (2011)	63 (11 UZH)	23 (3 UZH)	8 (- UZH)	2014-2026
3rd call (2008)	54 (5 UZH)	28 (4 UZH)	8 (1 UZH)	2010-2022
2nd call (2003)*	44 (5 UZH)	17 (2 UZH)	6 (2 UZH)	2005-2017
1st call (1999)	82	34	14 (3 UZH)	2001-2013

*\* 2nd call was addressed to the fields of the Humanities and Social Sciences*



## Financial Scope of NCCR

*In million CHF per 4 years*

NCCR	Start		1st Phase	2ndPhase	3rd Phase
<b>Evolving Language</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>SNSF UZH</b>	<b>17 5.7</b>		
Kidney.CH	2010	SNSF UZH	16.5 3.5	16.5 3.5	10.6 3.5
Democracy	2005	SNSF UZH	7.1 3.4	7.5 3.6	5.3 2.5
Mediality	2005	SNSF UZH	5.7 2.3	6.0 2.4	4.2 1.7
FINRISK	2001	SNSF UZH	10.7 3.3	11.0 3.3	6.5 2.0
Neuro	2001	SNSF UZH	16.4 6.0	16.4 6.0	8.8 3.3
Structural Biology	2001	SNSF UZH	14.4 6.0	14.4 6.0	7.9 3.4



## Points to consider for NCCR proposal-Likely SNSF criteria

*(Prof. Isabelle Mansuy)*

### **Scientific excellence:**

- Important and topical theme
- Best of science
- Clear added-value of projects

### **Structural measures:**

- Solid measures with concrete plan
- Promotion of young generation/women
- Education
- Infrastructure

### **Quality of consortium:**

- Should include the best people working on the topic in CH
- Synergy and complementarity between teams
- Diversity



# Questions

**The Division Research Development is available for questions and support**

Maurus Bolfig, 44812, [maurus.bolfig@uzh.ch](mailto:maurus.bolfig@uzh.ch)

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**All information and Templates can be found under:**

<https://www.research.uzh.ch/en/funding/researchers/NCCR.html>.

