University of Basel Research Fund: Application Guidelines

Questions about how to write and submit a research application should be emailed to the Office of the Vice President for Research at: forschungsfonds@unibas.ch

General Provisions

Principles
The University of Basel research fund supports research projects conducted by members of the University of Basel in accordance with the relevant call for proposals. It complements established instruments of research and career advancement (e.g. SNSF).

Funding is awarded to support outstanding academic quality. The main focus is on promoting excellent early career researchers and strengthening the strategic profile of the University of Basel.

Applications are to be submitted in accordance with the relevant call for proposals, taking into account the guidelines and the relevant information sheet. Projects can be funded for a maximum of 24 months. Consecutive funding allocations are not possible.

A. Funding Opportunities

a) Projects to strengthen the strategic research profile
Researchers at the University of Basel are entitled to apply for funding for the following project types.

i. Strategic projects: Start-up funding to aid the preparation of
   - joint projects (NCCR, Horizon 2020 collaboration, etc.);
   - funding applications for larger projects (e.g. ERC grants);
   - funding applications for interdisciplinary projects (e.g. Sinergia).
Projects are supported that have as their aim the submission of larger research projects funded by established research funding institutions. As a rule, the applicant will receive funding for a temporary position or a (partial) leave of absence and for materials relevant to the project.

ii. Network projects: Funding for projects from recognized University of Basel networks.
Researchers from an existing network recognized by the University of Basel may apply for funding for a substantial project within the network. The applicant will receive funding for a temporary position or a (partial) leave of absence and for materials relevant to the project.

b) Promotion of excellent early career researchers
Applications may be submitted by postdocs employed at the University of Basel, a University of Basel hospital, or an associated institute. Doctoral students must be matriculated at the University of Basel (as their home institution) and declare the doctoral program in which they are enrolled.

Early career researchers are doctoral students, early career researchers with a doctorate, and members of the Faculty of Medicine pursuing an academic career. The funding is aimed at those who demonstrate a high degree of academic interest through their previous academic achievements, whose particular achievements qualify them for an academic career, and those who have made a promising, demonstrable contribution to both research and teaching in equal measure.

Funding granted to early career researchers is designated solely for academic qualifications, i.e. the successful completion of an applicant’s own research work. The aim of this funding is to support early career researchers as they move toward academic independence.
Projects by early career researchers with a doctorate (with the exception of assistant professors) may be supported by the research fund provided that applications for other funding options – such as the Swiss National Science Foundation – have not (yet) been submitted. This applies in particular to the development of larger-scale initial applications by postdocs. Funding applications can also be submitted for pilot projects to acquire initial data vital for a project application at a funding institution with peer review. Applicants should not be disproportionately involved in institution activities (teaching, administration, committee work) related to their further academic qualification.

The Faculty of Medicine provides annual funding specifically aimed at supporting the academic independence of early career researchers. The following funding opportunities are available for clinicians (residents and attending physicians):

1. Leave of absence for clinical research at a University of Basel hospital, start-up funding
   - Residents or young attending physicians
   - At least 2 years of full-time employment (100%) at a university hospital, with at least one year in Basel
   - Completed dissertation
   - Submission of an independent research project (possibly as part of a larger study)

2. Year abroad
   - With explanation as to why the applicant cannot apply for an SNSF grant or, in the case of a second year abroad, with a copy of the funding grant for the first year abroad
   - Employment lasting at least 2 years (total workload 100%) at a University of Basel hospital before the year abroad
   - At least 6 months of research activity before the stay abroad at a 50% workload (or a lower part-time workload for a longer period)
   - As a rule, applicants must return to a university hospital in Basel or Switzerland after the year abroad

3. Setup of a clinical research project in Basel following a stay abroad
   - Evidence of successful research activity abroad in the form of at least one publication (submitted after 12 months, in press after 24 months)
   - Setup of an independent research project or participation (with primary responsibility) in a multicentric project at a University of Basel hospital

4. Leave of absence for clinical research at a University of Basel hospital, support for advanced clinicians
   - Following 100% employment lasting a total of at least 2 years at a University of Basel hospital
   - Evidence of clinical research
   - Publications

B. Application Submissions

Calls for proposals are generally announced once a year or according to financial opportunities. Two submission deadlines are usually offered per year. Applications for research funding are submitted via online form, in electronic format, and in print form. Applications may be written in German, English, or French. The submission deadline will be stated in the call for proposals.

Applications not submitted by the deadline will not be considered. Confirmation of receipt will be sent by email within two weeks.
The ways in which applications may be submitted for a) funding for excellent early career researchers, b) strategic research projects, and c) network projects will be listed in a separate information sheet for each option.

Rejected projects cannot be resubmitted. Resubmission is only possible if recommended by the evaluating committee and upon fulfillment of the conditions communicated.

C. Funding Grants

The principles upon which funding is granted are outlined in the research fund guidelines. Applicants will be informed in writing as to whether their submission has been successful. There is no legal entitlement to a funding contribution.

If funding is not used for the stated purpose, it must be returned. Funding that has not been used upon completion of the project cannot be used for any other purpose and shall be returned to the research fund.

D. Reporting

As a rule, supported projects and their results (any publications) are to be published in the University of Basel research database.

Researchers in receipt of funding are obligated to provide academic and financial reports and accounts. The modalities and deadlines specified in the funding letter/declaration of acceptance and obligation are binding.

This document is to be considered solely as a translation of the legally binding German version.