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SPI Technogrants Call for Proposals

Deadline for applications: 19 October 2020, 12:00 (Swiss time)

COVID-19: The current sanitary situation generates uncertainties with regards to fieldwork. Should the situation so require, SPI will show flexibility in the management of selected projects.

1) ABOUT THE SPI TECHNOGRANTS

The SPI Technogrants support Swiss groups developing technologies relevant for research in polar regions (and other extreme environments such as remote high-altitude regions). Technogrants can also serve the improvement and adaptation of technologies to extreme environments, or support new technological developments to be used in the field for polar or remote high-altitude research.

2) ELIGIBLE COSTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The grants are destined to cover costs for up to 50'000 CHF per successfully evaluated project. A detailed budget will be requested from each applicant. For this year (2020), the total budget allocated to SPI Technogrants will be capped at 150'000 CHF. The grants can be used to complement the funding of initiatives supported by larger funding schemes (e.g. SNSF, EU, etc.).

Eligible costs include:

All costs related to the conception, development, field testing (especially in the extreme environments of polar or remote high-altitude regions in which it is supposed to operate), upgrading and adjusting of science support technologies in a broad sense. Travel and logistics costs for field testing purposes are also eligible. The SPI also considers the offset of carbon emissions as an eligible cost, if not an option offered by the institution of affiliation of the applicant.

The SPI Technogrants will not support:

Costs relating to salaries of permanent academic positions, overhead as well as the acquisition of long-term assets (as opposed to consumable required for the project).

3) TARGET PUBLIC

The SPI Technogrants are complementary to the existing Polar Access Fund and SPI Exploratory Grants. Consequently, eligibility will be restricted to Swiss led developments of technologies relevant for research in polar regions (and other extreme environments in remote high-altitude regions). The grants

are open from Master's students to senior researchers based at a Swiss public research institution.

Applications are submitted by a Principal Investigator (PI), which will be SPI's contact person within his institution. In case of a submission by a Master's student, the application has to be overseen by a supervisor.

Private companies and start-ups are eligible to join the project as partners but should work within a project coordinated by a PI employed at a Swiss public research institution. SPI cannot support projects coordinated by private companies.

4) GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The SPI Technogrants fund technology development relevant for polar science, the Arctic and Antarctic, according to the SPI's high latitude focus.

High-altitude research is an essential part of SPI and an important complementary area of interest to high latitude poles. Funding of technology developments for high-altitude research will concentrate on technologies contributing to comparative high-altitude studies in support of polar issues and on complex and expensive logistics for field-testing thereof in remote high-altitude areas.

5) ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are reminded to study the eligibility rules for this call closely. Ineligible applications will not be submitted for evaluation. To be eligible, proposals must notably respect the call's general aims, the definition of the call's target public, eligible costs as well as geographic focus.

6) SUBMISSION

A complete application file consists of:

- A) Completed online application form (contact, main information and proposal)
- B) Attachments to be uploaded into online application form as PDF:
 - 1) Letters of support
 - 2) CVs of the applicant and main partners, incl. publication lists as PDF (compulsory – free format)

All application documents must be uploaded through the online application form. Applications sent by email will not be accepted. Incomplete proposals will be considered ineligible.

Submission information:

The deadline for submission will be 19 October 2020 (12:00 Swiss time). The online application form will be closed on the deadline date. No late applications will be accepted – no exceptions!

Should you encounter any problem in the submission process, contact: spi-grants@epfl.ch. Please note however that trouble-shooting in the last minutes before the deadline cannot be guaranteed.

7) EVALUATION

Eligible proposals submitted before the deadline will be evaluated by an independent scientific panel appointed by the SPI.

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 1) Technological novelty and potential (disruption)
- 2) Impact of the proposed technology on polar science (added value)
- 3) Impact of the requested funding on the development process
- 4) Feasibility of the project
- 5) Potential of the applicant(s)/consortium

Evaluation results will be transmitted to applicants at the latest 4 months after the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive a grant agreement (contract) from SPI specifying the conditions of the grant (reporting, payments, etc.).

For any additional information or clarification, please contact: spi-grants@epfl.ch .