

**Press Release**

**April 14<sup>th</sup> 2010**

## **Sciex-NMS<sup>ch</sup> - The Swiss contribution to EU enlargement**

### **Switzerland promotes young researchers from the New Member States of the EU**

**Within the framework of the Swiss contribution to EU enlargement towards the New Member States of the EU, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is financing the programme Sciex-NMS<sup>ch</sup> which aims at encouraging scientific exchanges. A total budget of 29.08 millions Swiss francs is available for the whole period 2009-2016. As a result of the first official call, 26 researchers from Poland, the Czech Republic and Estonia will carry out a research stay at a Swiss university or a university of Applied Sciences. The programme is open to all scientific fields, however most of the projects selected concern Materials Science and Life Sciences.**

The "Scientific Exchange Programme between Switzerland and the New Member States of the European Union" (Sciex-NMS<sup>ch</sup>) aims at facilitating research stays in Swiss research teams of doctoral and PostDoc candidates from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) implements the programme based on a mandate by the SDC.

After a pilot phase in 2009, the first official call was opened to Estonia, Poland and the Czech Republic with the final submission date fixed at November 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. On the whole, 77 eligible tenders were submitted. At the end of the evaluation procedure, the Sciex Steering Committee during its meeting of March 25<sup>th</sup> 2010 finally decided to select and to finance 26 excellent tenders.

#### **A precise evaluation procedure and the final decision of the Sciex Steering Committee**

All tenders were subjected to a precise evaluation procedure, which consisted, firstly, of an evaluation by the responsible teams in the partner countries and in Switzerland and then of an evaluation by an expert from the domain or field. The main evaluation criteria were the professional commitment of the Fellows and the Mentors, the specific objectives and the quality of the research project, the mutual benefits of the collaboration within the Swiss team and the degree of support assured by both partner institutions.

Based on this information (eligibility, quality and competitiveness) and on the budget available, the Sciex Steering Committee proceeded to the final selection of tenders.

#### **Selection of 26 excellent researchers**

In the end, the projects of 26 excellent researchers from Estonia (1), Poland (13) and the Czech Republic (12) were selected.

The success rate from this first official call amounts to 33% - thus guaranteeing the selection of excellent researchers as well as the quality of the selected research projects.

16 researchers will be integrated in a cantonal university (University of Basel 1; University of Bern 3; University of Fribourg 2; University of Geneva 2; University of Lausanne 2; Università della Svizzera italiana 1; University of Zürich 5), 7 in a Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne 1; Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich 6) and 3 in a research institute (Materials Science and Technology Research Institution 1; Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research 2).

The gender balance is respected since out of the 26 Fellows selected, 12 are female researchers and 14 are male researchers

Although the Sciex programme is open to all scientific disciplines, most of the projects selected concern Materials Science and Life Sciences.

As soon as all formalities will be dealt with (work contract, terms of reference, work permit and resident permit), the Sciex Fellows will join a research team at a Swiss partner institution for six to twenty-four months maximum and will receive a fellowship to cover the costs for salaries and for knowledge exchange.

**A financial commitment of more than 1.9 million Swiss francs**

The total amount allocated for this first official call amounts to 1.9 million Swiss francs – split as follows: 78'500 Swiss francs for financing researchers from Estland, 0.8 million Swiss francs for financing researchers from the Czech Republic and more than 1 million Swiss francs for financing researchers from Poland.

The list of all 26 selected Sciex Fellows and more detailed information about the Sciex programme are available on the website: [www.sciex.ch](http://www.sciex.ch). You will find also there the dates for the coming calls for tenders for the different partner countries.

**Further information**

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