



# Swiss National Science Foundation: Opportunities for Career Funding

Martin Christen

Max Weber Programme - Academic Careers Observatory Conference



SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

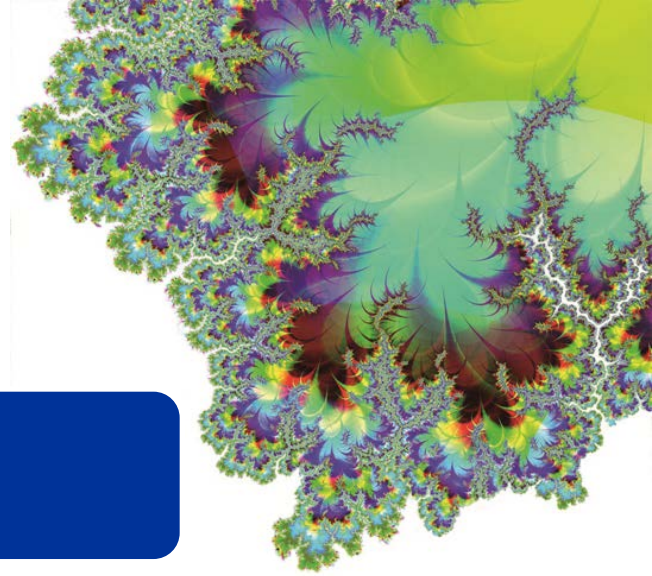
# Outline

**The SNSF, its mission and its values**

**Career funding schemes outside Switzerland**

**Career funding schemes within Switzerland**

**Application procedure and evaluation criteria**



# The SNSF Mission

- Support scientific research on behalf of the Swiss Confederation
- Invest in young researchers
- Enable research stays abroad
- Promote international cooperation
- Promote gender equality





# Our Values



## Quality

We promote scientific excellence.

We also expect our own performance to be of a high standard.

## Independence

We operate autonomously and evaluate impartially.

## Responsibility

We are a reliable partner.

We fulfil our tasks judiciously and always act ethically.

## Fairness

Our decisions are well-founded and we respect equal opportunities.

# Our Commitment to Researchers



- We fund projects in **all disciplines**.
- Our evaluation procedure is **competitive** and **transparent**.
- The **quality** of the research is our central criterion.
- Researchers from all over the world review proposals based on **international** standards.
- We are dedicated, in particular, to **promoting young researchers** and to **gender equality**.

# Challenges on Different Levels

## Funding / Evaluation

Standards of scientific quality

Further development of evaluation procedure

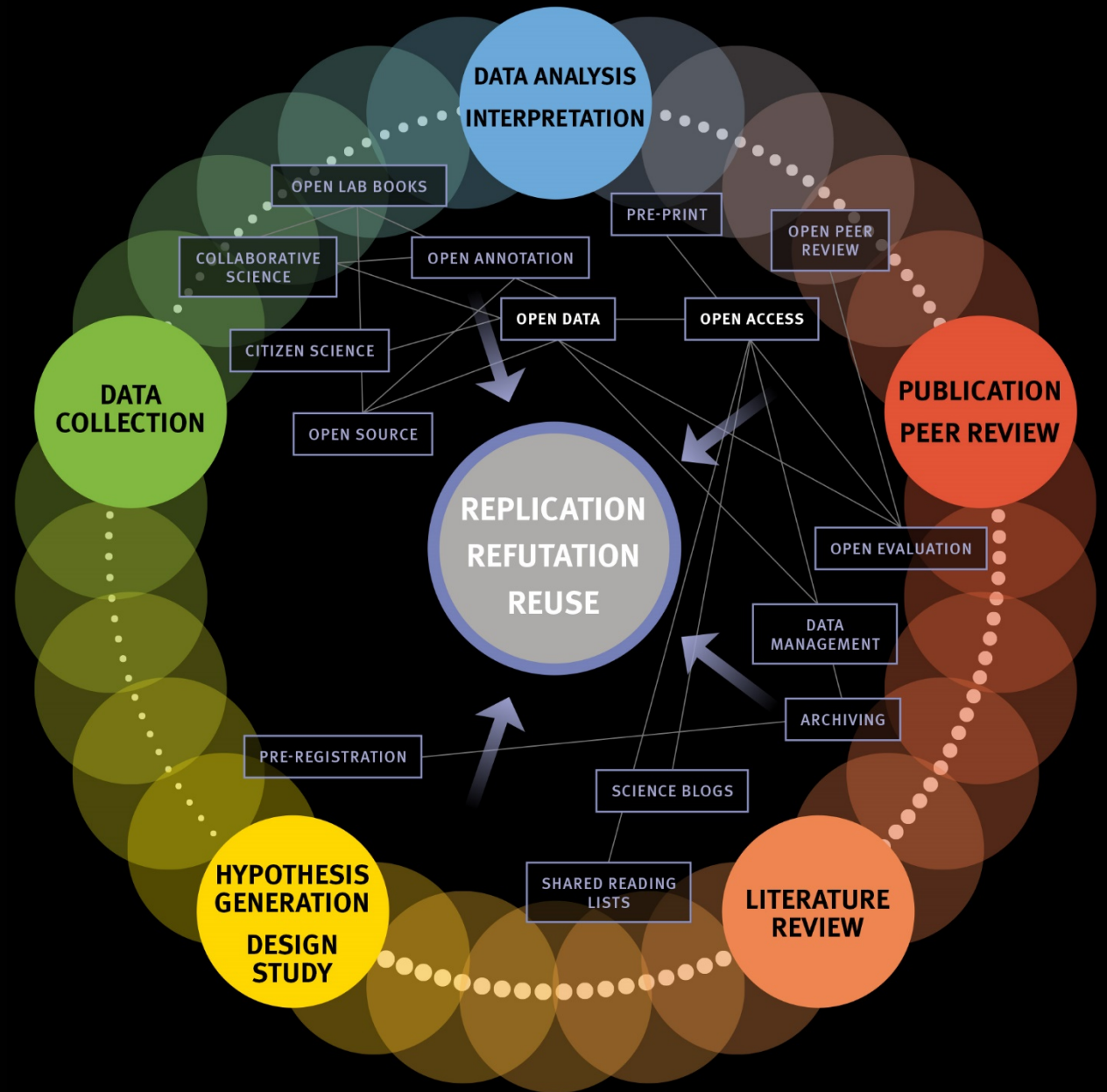
- Implement DORA
- Explore alternative evaluation mechanisms
- Optimize evaluation of use-inspired projects

Open Science:

- Publications
- Research data



# Excellence Comprises Openness



# Open Access Policy by 2020



**All (100%)** publications out of SNSF-funded projects will be made available in **Open Access** by **2020** (*i.e.* for future publications, not retroactive)

- In line with the Open Access strategy of the **European Union (2020)**
- More ambitious than the Swiss **National Open Access Strategy (2024)**
- Implementation is ongoing



# Open Research Data



Research data sharing forms a fundamental contribution to the **impact**, **transparency** and **reproducibility** of scientific research.

In addition to being carefully curated and stored, the SNSF believes research data should be **shared as openly as possible**.

Since October 2017

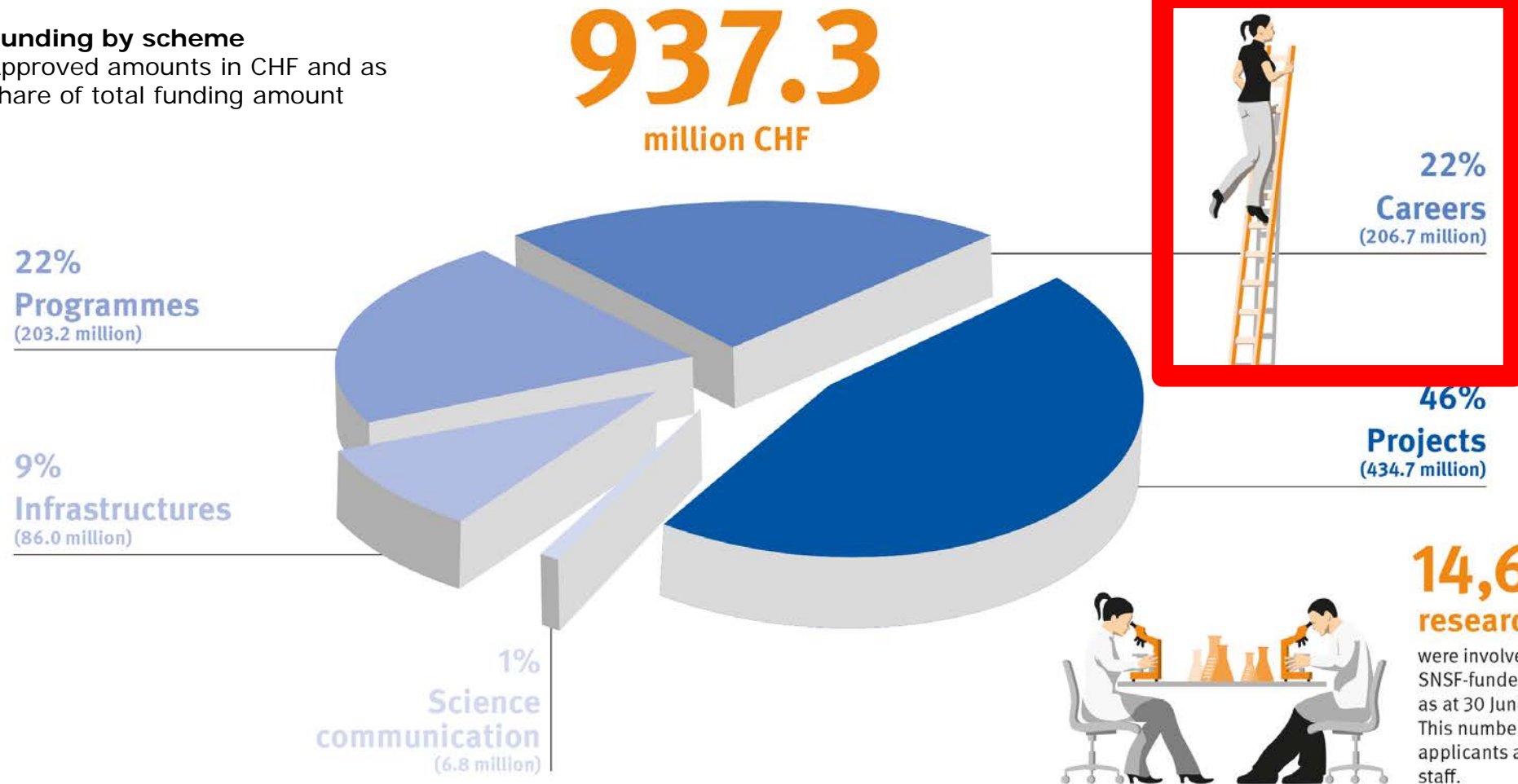
- Data Management Plans (DMP) are now a formal requirement for most funding schemes offered by the SNSF
- Published data have to be shared on public repositories

For information: [http://www.snf.ch/en/theSNSF/research-policies/open\\_research\\_data/](http://www.snf.ch/en/theSNSF/research-policies/open_research_data/)

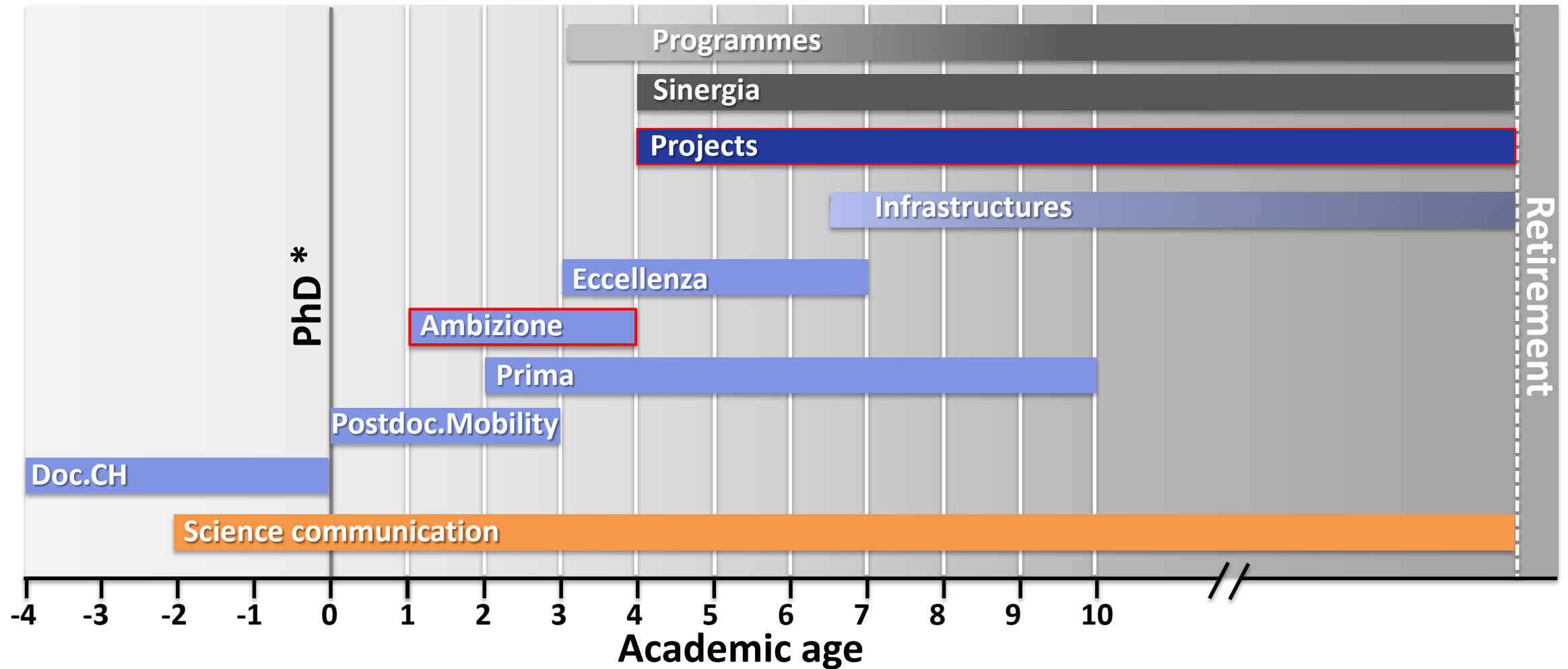
# Funding Portfolio

## Funding by scheme

Approved amounts in CHF and as share of total funding amount

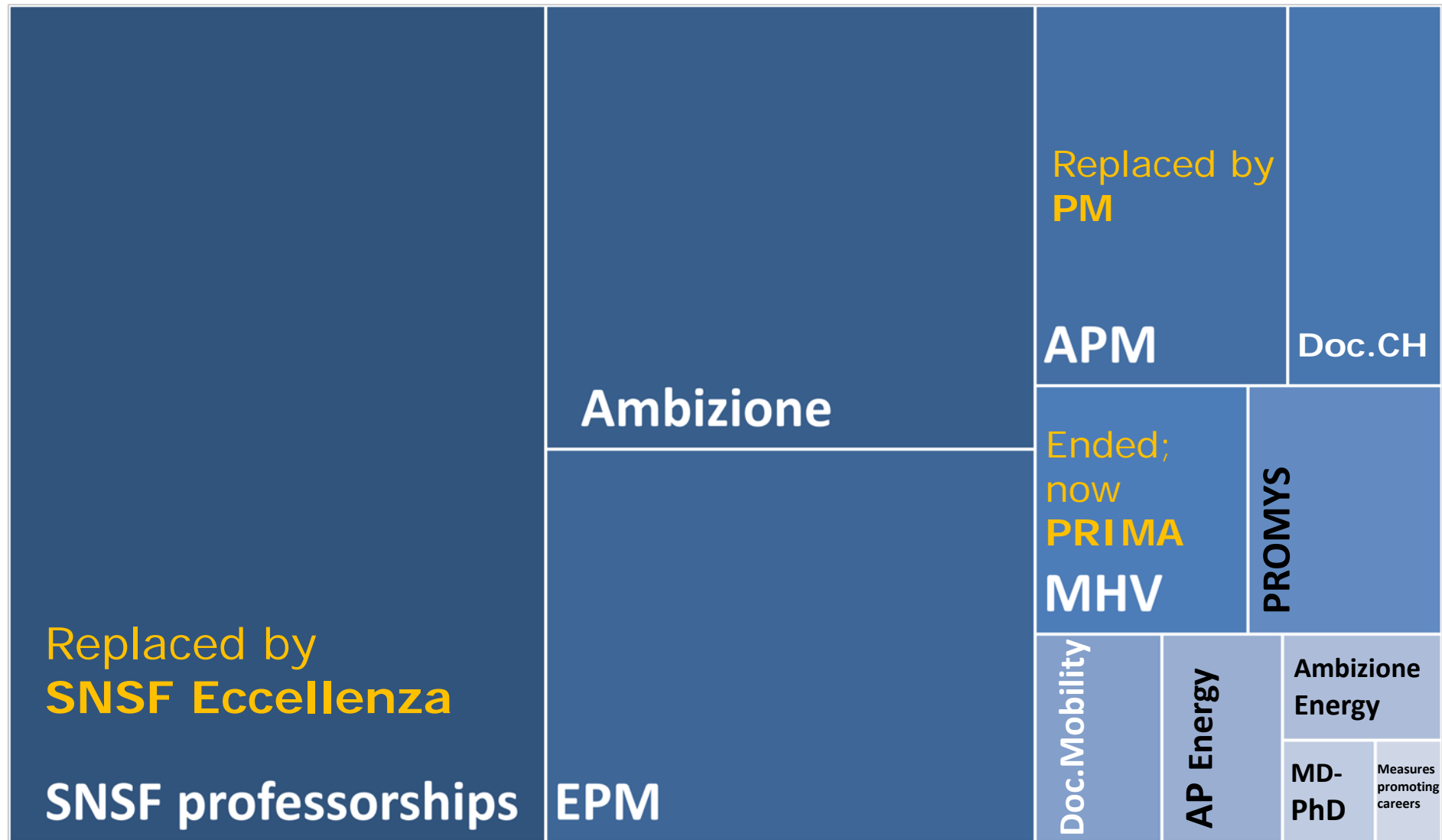


# Funding throughout a Researchers' Academic Life



\* or 3 years of postgraduate research experience

# Career Funding Schemes (Data 2016)





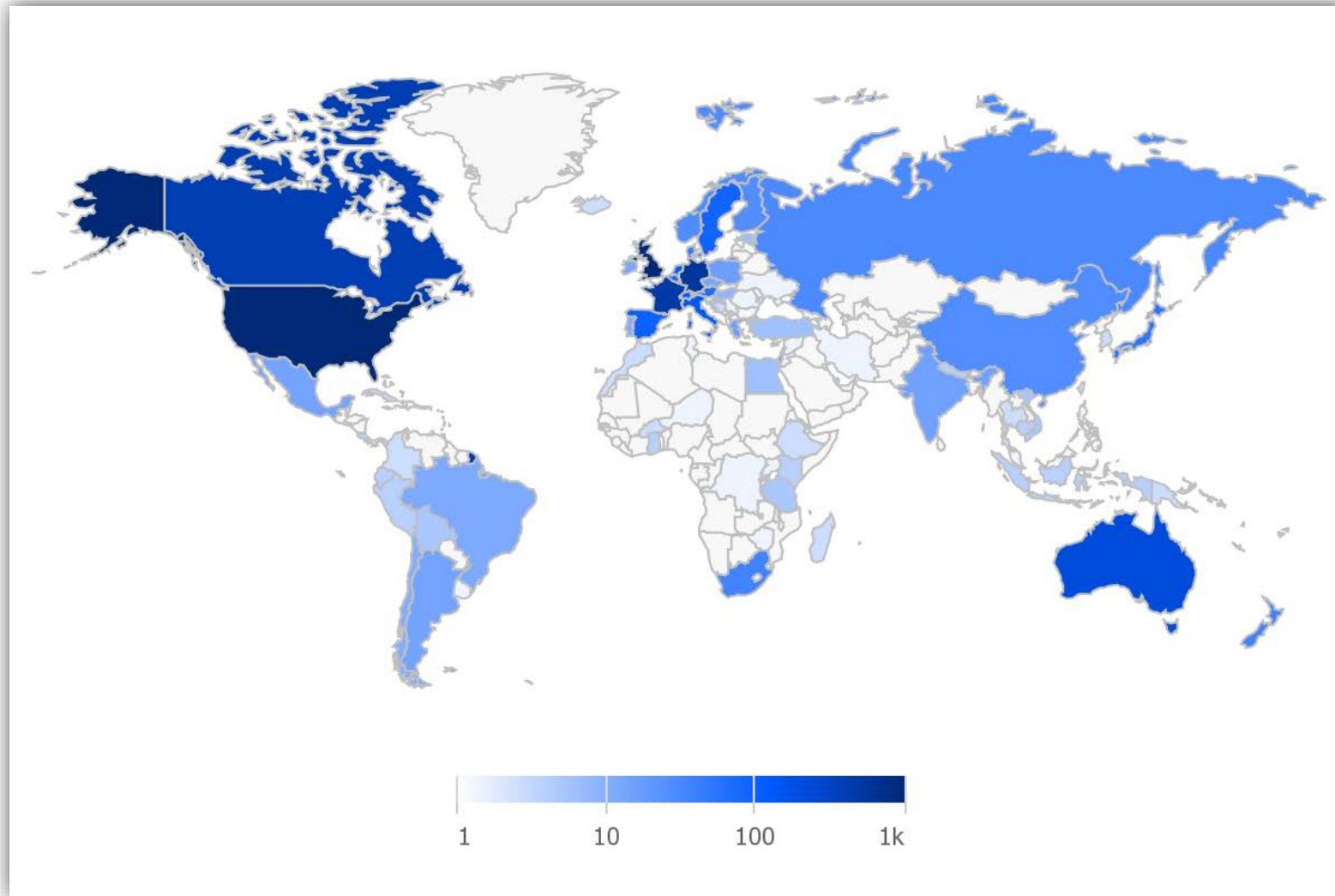


# Career Funding Schemes Outside of Switzerland

Mobility Fellowships

Scientific Exchanges





## Fellowship Destinations per Country

# Mobility Fellowships

**For PhD students:**

**Doc.Mobility**

**For postdocs starting their career:**

**Early Postdoc.Mobility**

**Postdoc.Mobility \***

*\* replacing Advanced Postdoc.Mobility as of 2018*



# Early Postdoc.Mobility (EPM)



## Aim

- Research stay abroad for postdocs starting their career (12 – 18 months)



## Personal requirements

- **Doctorate (PhD)** already obtained or **obtainment within 9 months**, or medical training completed with a doctorate (MD)
- Doctorate obtained **no more than 2 years ago**; medical researchers must have passed the state examination no more than 6 years ago
- **Link with Switzerland** (Swiss nationality; or at least **3 years** of activity at a Swiss research institution for applicants with foreign nationality)



## Submission deadlines

- 1 March 2018 and 1 September 2018

# Postdoc.Mobility (PM)



## Aim

- Research stay abroad for postdocs (24 months in principle, but at least 12 months) with a **return option** to Switzerland (3 – 12 months)



## Personal requirements

- **Doctorate (PhD, MD-PhD)** or completed postgraduate studies in medicine
- Submission up to **3 years after the doctoral exam** (PhD, MD-PhD)
- Medical researchers without MD-PhD: submission up to 8 years after the state examination, at least 3 years of clinical activity required
- **Link with Switzerland** (Swiss nationality; or at least **2 years** of activity at a Swiss research institution for applicants with foreign nationality)



## Submission deadlines

- 1 February 2018 and 1 August 2018

# Mobility Fellowships



## Annual contribution



- Basic amount: **CHF 40'000 – 71'500** (host country, marital status, scheme)
- Child allowance: CHF 12'000 per child
- Travel allowance (outward and return journey incl. partner/children)
- Registration fees (if justified): 75% or max. CHF 15'000
- Conference costs: max. CHF 2'000
- Research costs: max. CHF 3'000 (only granted in exceptional cases)

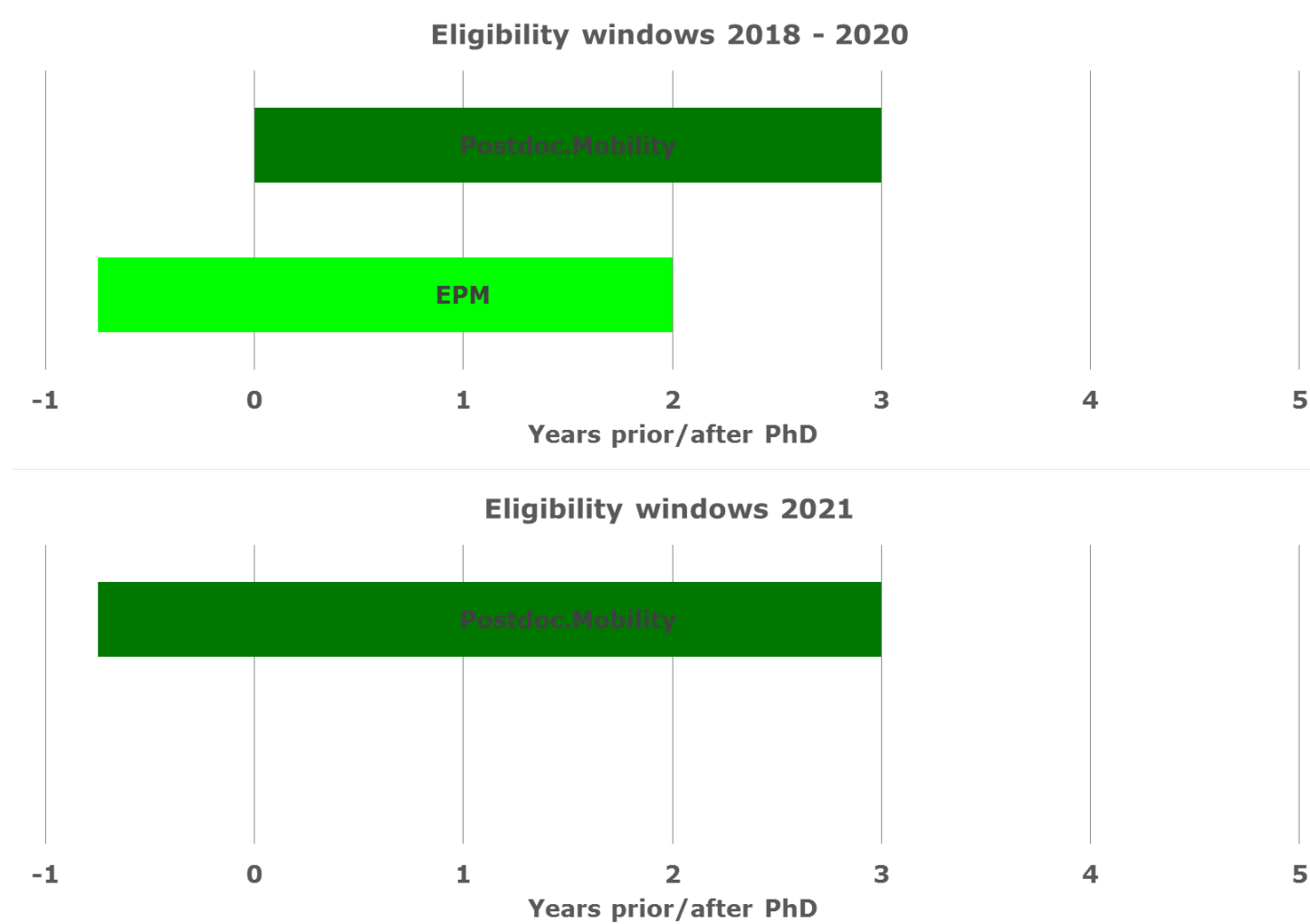


## Postdoc.Mobility return option grant

- Grantee's own salary, including social security contributions



# Simplifying Funding Schemes



# Scientific Exchanges

- Enables researchers **based in Switzerland** to organize **scientific conferences** and **workshops**, as well as **visits** by Swiss researchers to other countries or visits by researchers from abroad to Switzerland
- Duration of the exchange:
  - Events: 1-5 days (**only in Switzerland**)
  - Visits: 1-6 months
- Covers **travel expenses** and **room and board costs** of researchers taking part in the events or of visiting researchers
- Submission at least 4 months before the exchange (ongoing, **no submission deadline**)



**For details, please contact:**  
**SNSF Scientific Exchanges**  
[scientific.exchanges@snf.ch](mailto:scientific.exchanges@snf.ch)



# Career Funding Schemes within Switzerland

**Doc.CH** (*not presented here, aimed at early PhD students*)

**Ambizione**

**PRIMA**

~~SNSF Professorships~~ **SNSF Eccellenza**

# Ambizione



## Aim

- Create conditions for starting an independent career in Switzerland

## Personal requirements

- MD-PhD or PhD; or min. 3 years of research activities as equivalent qualification
- **Proven mobility:** Postdoctoral research activities of at least **12 months** at a different university from that of the dissertation
- Eligibility window: **1-4 years** after PhD/equivalent qualification
- MD: at least 3 years of clinical activity; up to 9 years after the medical license
- **No previous link** with Switzerland necessary.



## Objective requirements

- Work-time percentage generally 100% (at least 80% in specific cases)
- Clinical researchers: 80–90% project / related training, min. 10% clinical activities



# Ambizione



## Duration

- **4 years** (no follow-up grants)



## Eligible costs

- **Ambizione grant**: salary of grantee and project funds
- **Ambizione project grant**: only project funds
- Project funds (personnel, equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)
- Candidates with sufficient experience may apply for a PhD student



## Contribution

- Grantee's salary (if applicable), plus
- Project funds: max. **CHF 400'000** for 4 years

## Submission deadline

- 1 November 2018



# PRIMA

(Promoting Women in Academia)



## Aim

- **Selective** promotion of excellent **women** researchers who have a **high potential** for an academic career (*i.e.* to be appointed as a Professor)
- Lead your own team to realise an independent research project



## Personal requirements

- MD-PhD or PhD; or min. 3 years of research activities as equivalent qualification
- Eligibility window: **2–10 years** after PhD/equivalent qualification
- **2 years** of postdoctoral research activity
- **No formal mobility requirement** for submission
- **No previous link** with Switzerland necessary.

## Objective requirements

- Work-time percentage generally 100% (at least 80% in specific cases)

# PRIMA



## Duration

- **5 years** (no follow-up grants)



## Eligible costs

- Salary of grantee and project funds
- Project funds (personnel, equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)



## Contribution

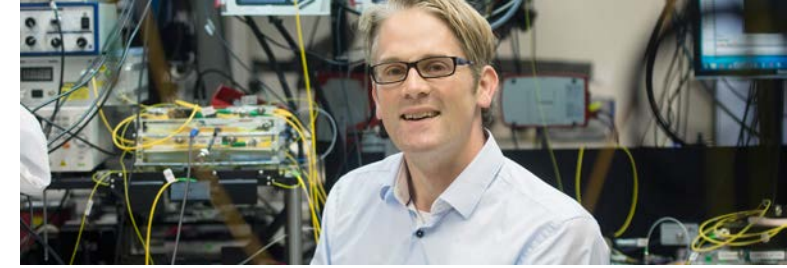
- Grantee's own salary, plus
- Project funds: max. **CHF 750'000** for 5 years



## Submission deadline

- 1 November 2018

# Eccellenza



## Aim

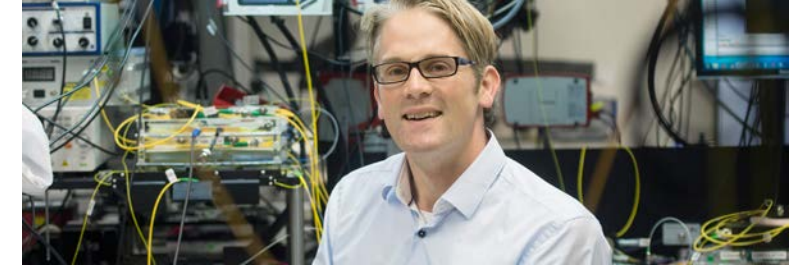
- Form your own team at professorial level to realise an independent research project

## Eccellenza fellowships (salary of grantee and project funds)

- Candidates may not yet hold or have held a professorship position
- Eligibility window: **3–8 years after PhD** or equivalent qualification
- MD: at least 3 years clinical activity; up to 12 years after the medical license
- **Proven mobility**: Postdoctoral research experience of **at least 24 months** at a different university from that of the dissertation; of which min. 12 months abroad
- **Link with Switzerland**: Swiss university degree, Swiss nationality or at least 2 years of research activity in Switzerland



# Eccellenza



## Eccellenza grants (only project funds)

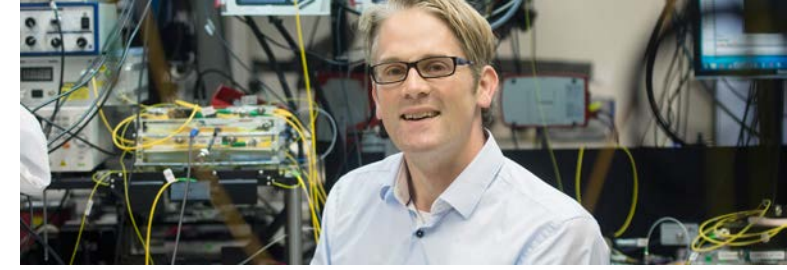
- Targets young assistant professors **with tenure track** (APTT) in Switzerland
- Employment as APTT must have began no more than 18 months *before* the submission deadline, or must begin by the project start date at the latest
- **No requirement on eligibility window or mobility**



## Objective requirements (valid for both types of SNSF Eccellenza award)

- Work-time percentage generally 100% (at least 80% in specific cases)
- **Eccellenza fellowships:** at least 80% work-time for research and further scientific education, 20% teaching
- **University of applied sciences:** devote at least 70% to research and further scientific education, 30% teaching
- **Medical researchers doing clinical work:** at least 50% research and training related to the project; up to 50% clinical activities

# Eccellenza



## Duration

- **5 years** (no follow-up grants)



## Eligible costs

- Salary of grantee (at local assistant professor level; if applicable)
- Project funds (personnel, equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)



## Contribution

- **Eccellenza fellowships:**  
Salary of grantee plus project funds of up to **CHF 1'000'000** for 5 years
- **Eccellenza grants:**  
Project funds up to **CHF 1'500'000** for 5 years, may include max. 20% own salary

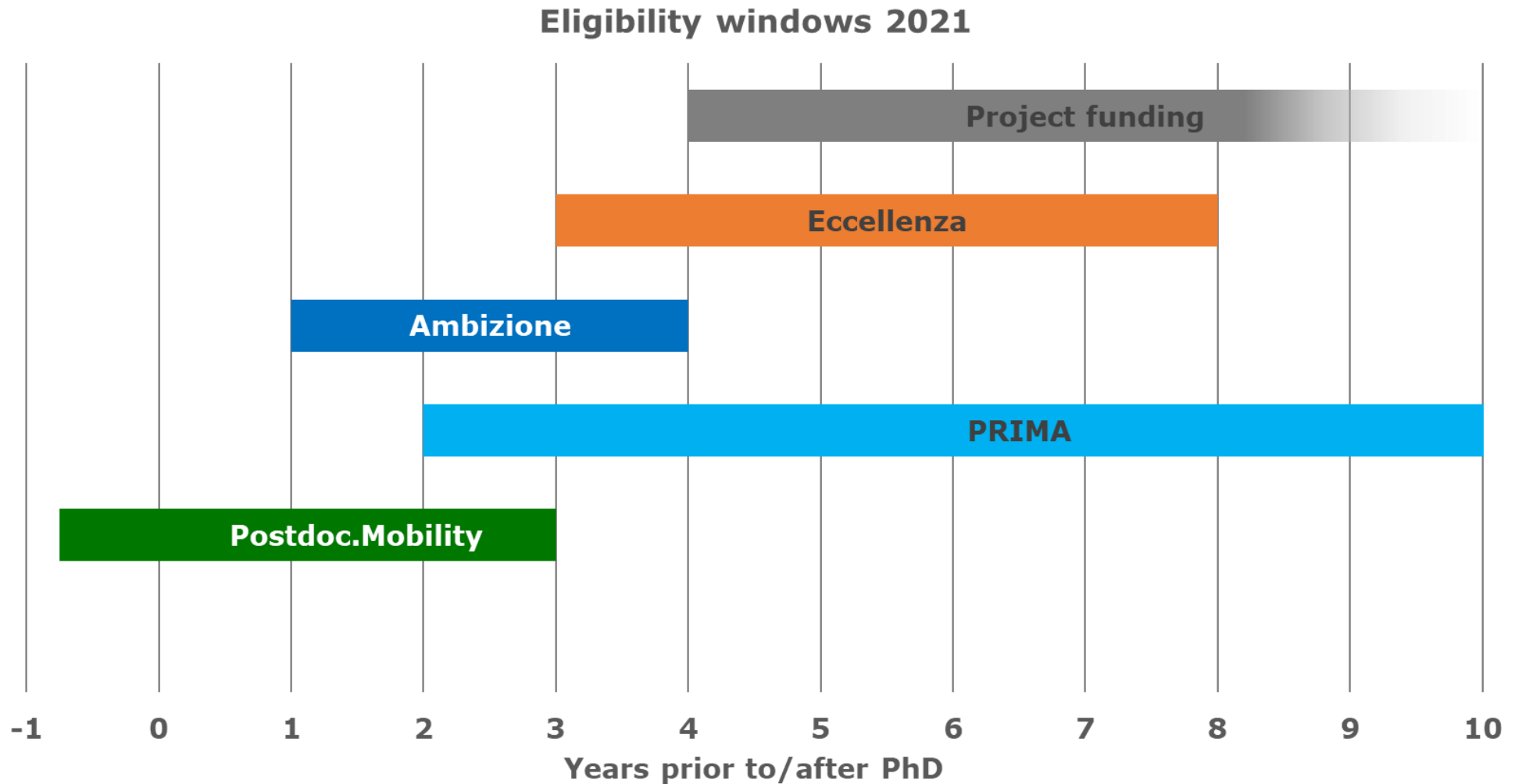


## Submission deadline (both award types)

- 15 February 2018 (**first call**), next deadline **1 February 2019**



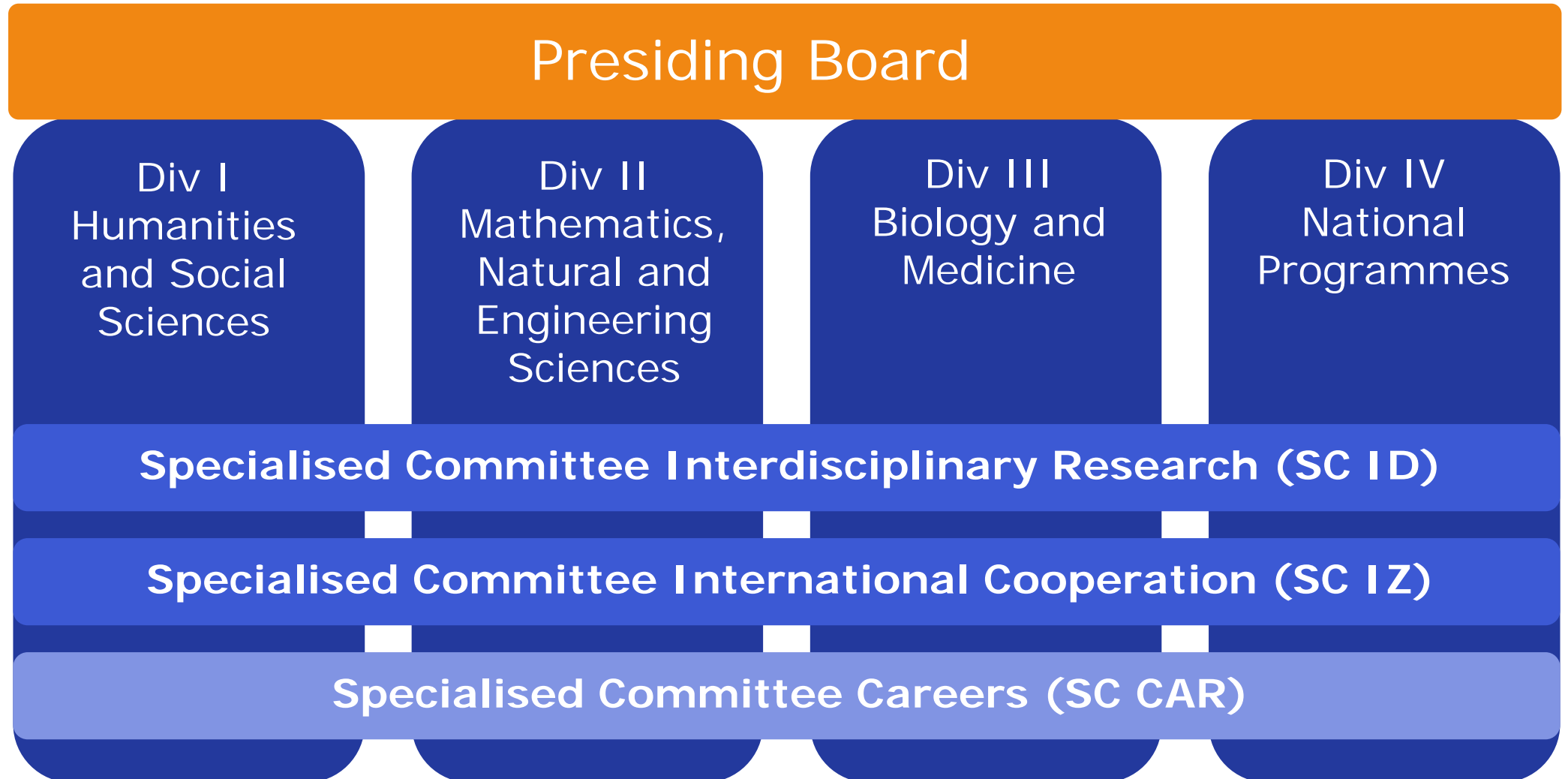
# Promoting Early Independence with Some Flexibility



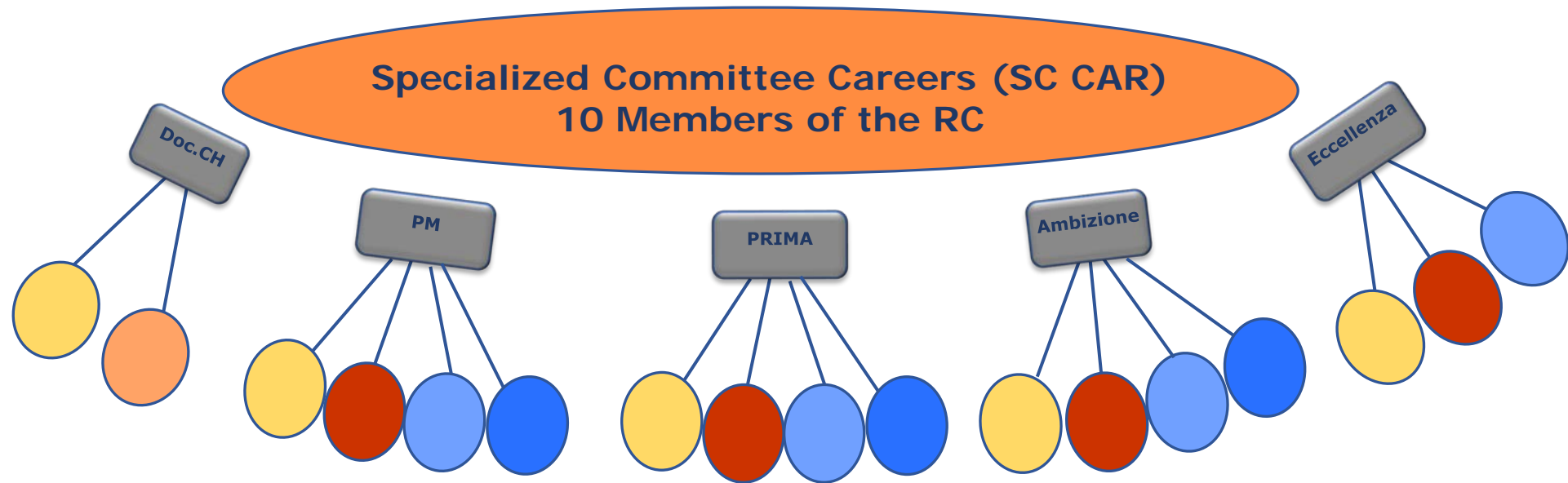


## The Evaluation Procedure at the SNSF

# National Research Council (NRC)



# Evaluation Bodies in Career Funding



Total 17 Evaluation Panels (~300 members),  
separated by major group of disciplines

~ 2500 proposals in 2017  
~ 210 million CHF total budget

Doc.Mobility, Early Postdoc.Mobility (EPM)





# One-Stage Evaluation Procedure (Mobility fellowships)

## **Submission of complete application**

### **Administrative Office**

- Check of formal and personal conditions
- Attribution of referee and co-referee

### **Evaluation by referee/co-referee**

- (optional) Review by external experts
- Referee's / co-referee's recommendation to fund or reject

### **Discussion and proposal by the Evaluation Commission**

- Doc.Mobility and Early Postdoc.Mobility are evaluated by University Research Commissions

### **Provisional decision by the Specialised Committee Careers**

- Doc.Mobility and Early Postdoc.Mobility decisions by the Research Commissions are final

### **Approval by the Presiding Board of the National Research Council**

### **Communication of decision by the Administrative Offices**





# Two-Stage Evaluation Procedure (PRIMA, Ambizione, Eccellenza)

## **Submission of complete application**

### **Administrative Office**

- Check of formal and personal conditions
- Attribution of referee and co-referee

### **Evaluation phase 1**

- Evaluation by committees (by major group of disciplines)

### **Decision on evaluation phase 1 by Specialised Committee Careers**

- Rejection phase 1 or invitation phase 2

### **Evaluation phase 2**

- Peer-reviewing
- Evaluation by committees (see above) and **personal interview** with the applicants

### **Provisional decision on evaluation phase 2 by Specialised Committee Careers and final approval by Presiding Board of the National Research Council**

- Rejection phase 2 or funding

### **Communication of decision by the Administrative Offices**



# Scientific Evaluation Criteria

## **Project**

- Scientific relevance (including broader impact for use-inspired projects)
- Originality and topicality
- Suitability of methods and feasibility

## **Applicant**

- Track record of the applicant
- Expertise with regard to the proposed project

## **Career funding (additional criteria)**

- Mobility (past and future)
- Research/Host institution
- Potential for scientific or academic career
- Independence

# If You Are Not Successful ...

## ... please first ...

- read the decision letter **carefully**
- External reviews may contain more information (rejections in phase 2 only)
- Cross-check with the decision letter
- If you have questions, ask the SNSF administrative offices for clarifications
- Possibility to ask for a reconsideration or submit an appeal

## Can you improve your application?

- It is possible to apply one more time for the same funding scheme if you still fulfil all formal requirements (except for SNSF Eccellenza **grants**: one shot only)
- List and comment the changes to the former version of the project

## Further Information



[www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch)

[www.mySNF.ch](http://www.mySNF.ch)



**Please do not hesitate to contact us!**

**+41 031 308 22 22**



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[LinkedIn.com/company/snsf](https://LinkedIn.com/company/snsf)

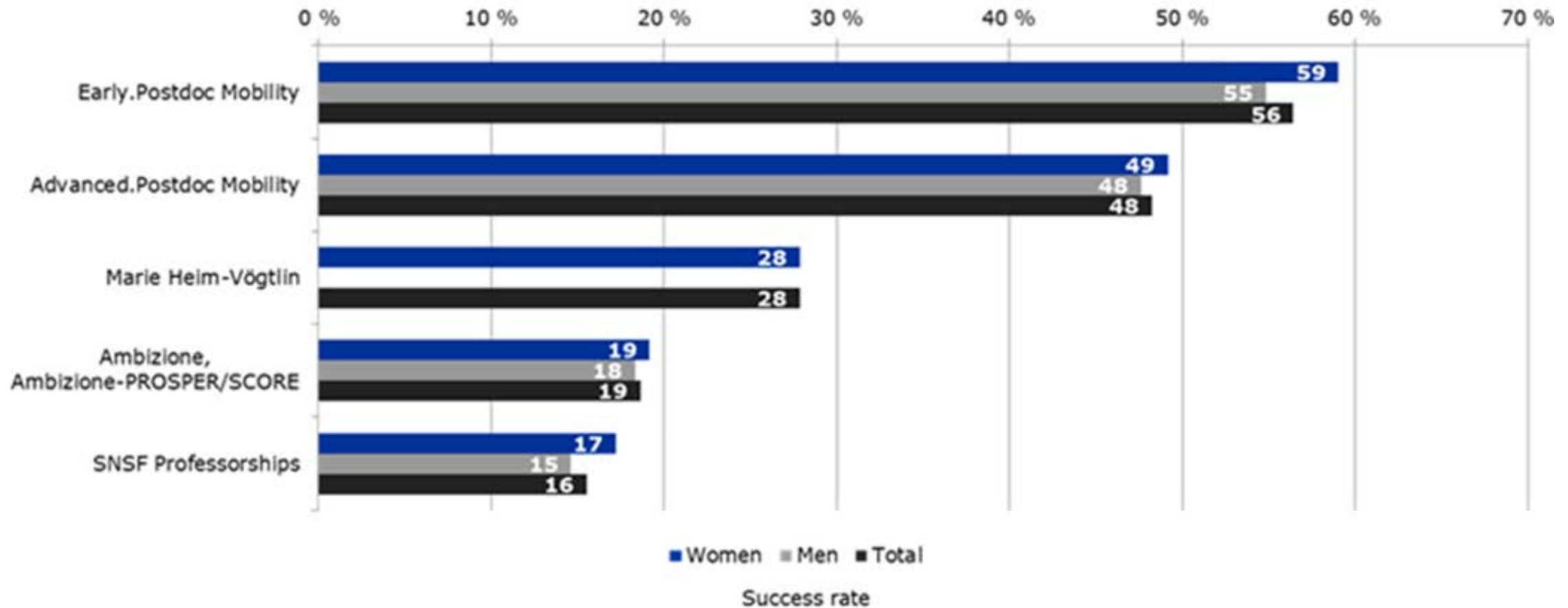


Thank you for your attention!





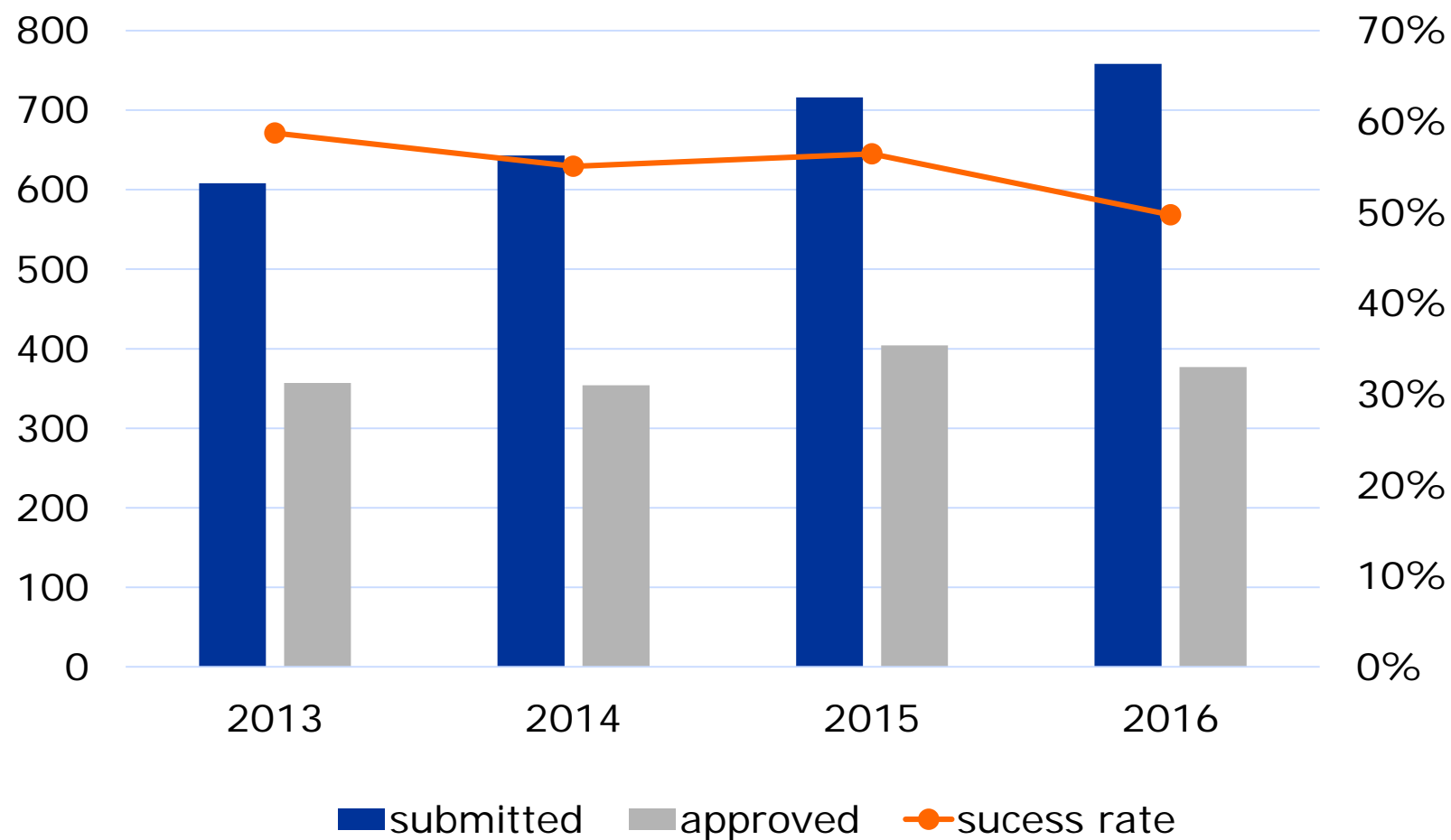
# Success Rates According to Instrument (Calls 2016)



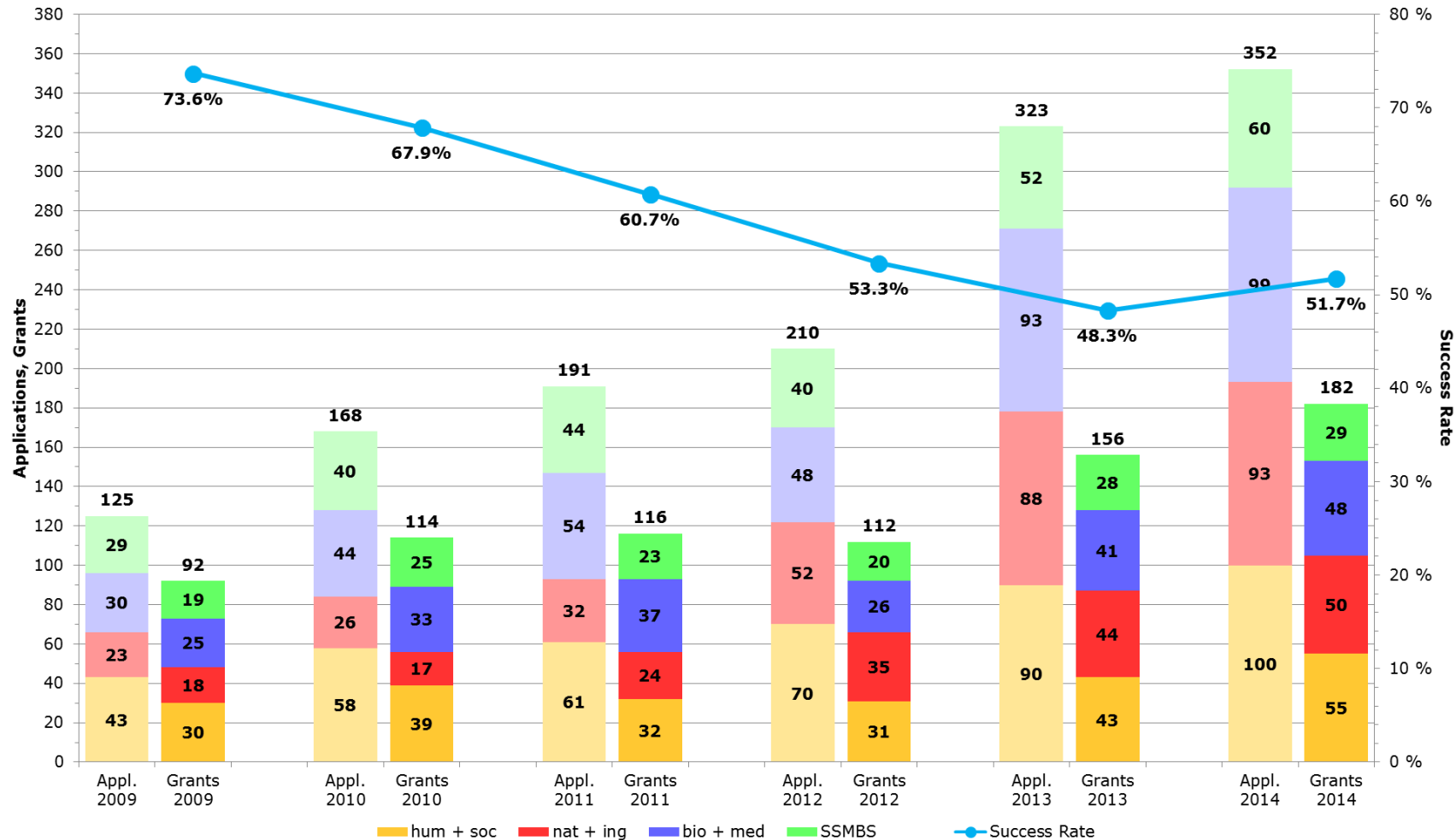
(SNSF professorships: Figures are for grants awarded in 2016)

# Evolution of Success Rates

## Early Postdoc.Mobility (2013–2016)



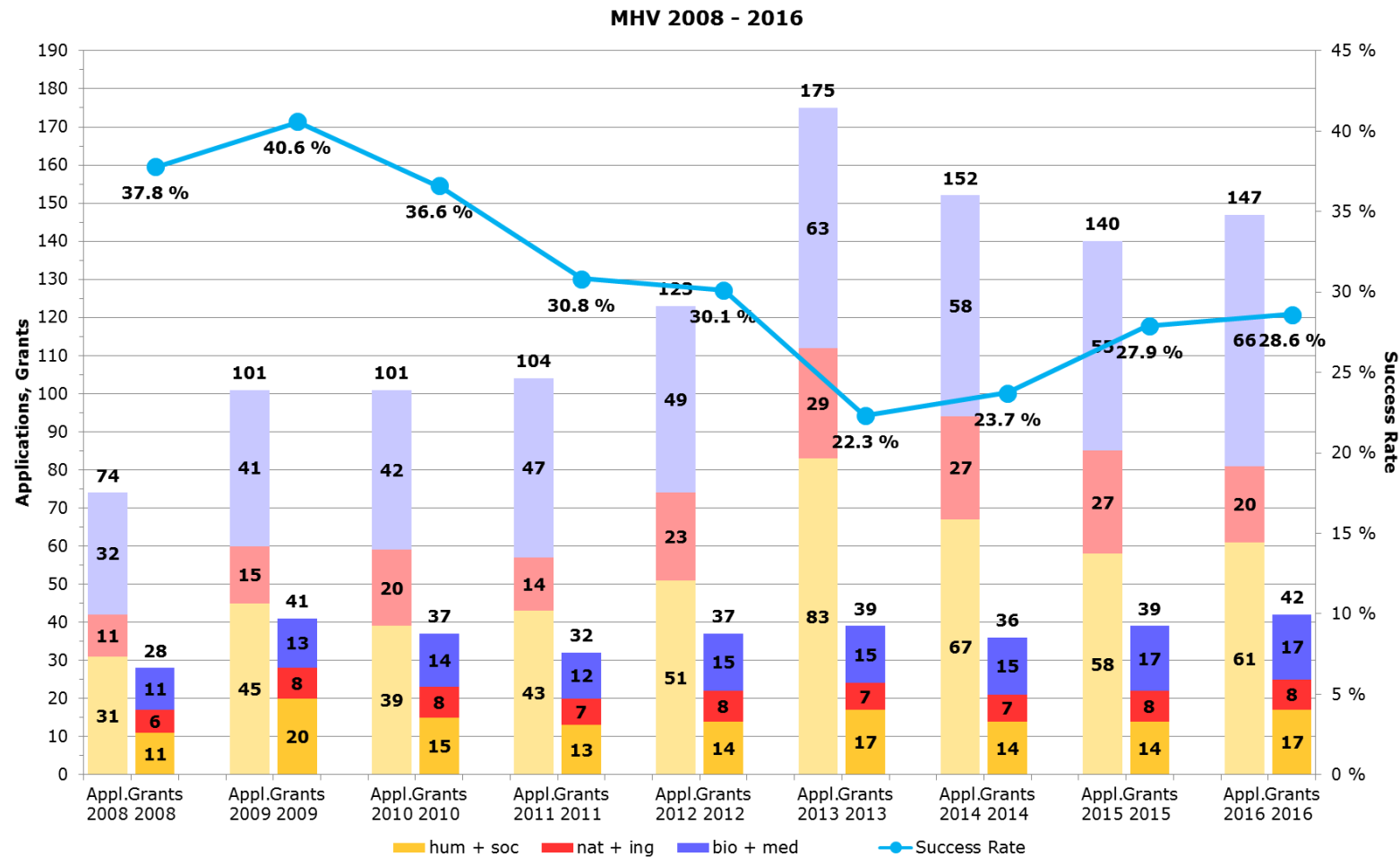
# Evolution of Success Rates Advanced Postdoc.Mobility (2009–2016)



(Figures include new applications + follow-up proposals + (as of 2014) return option proposals)

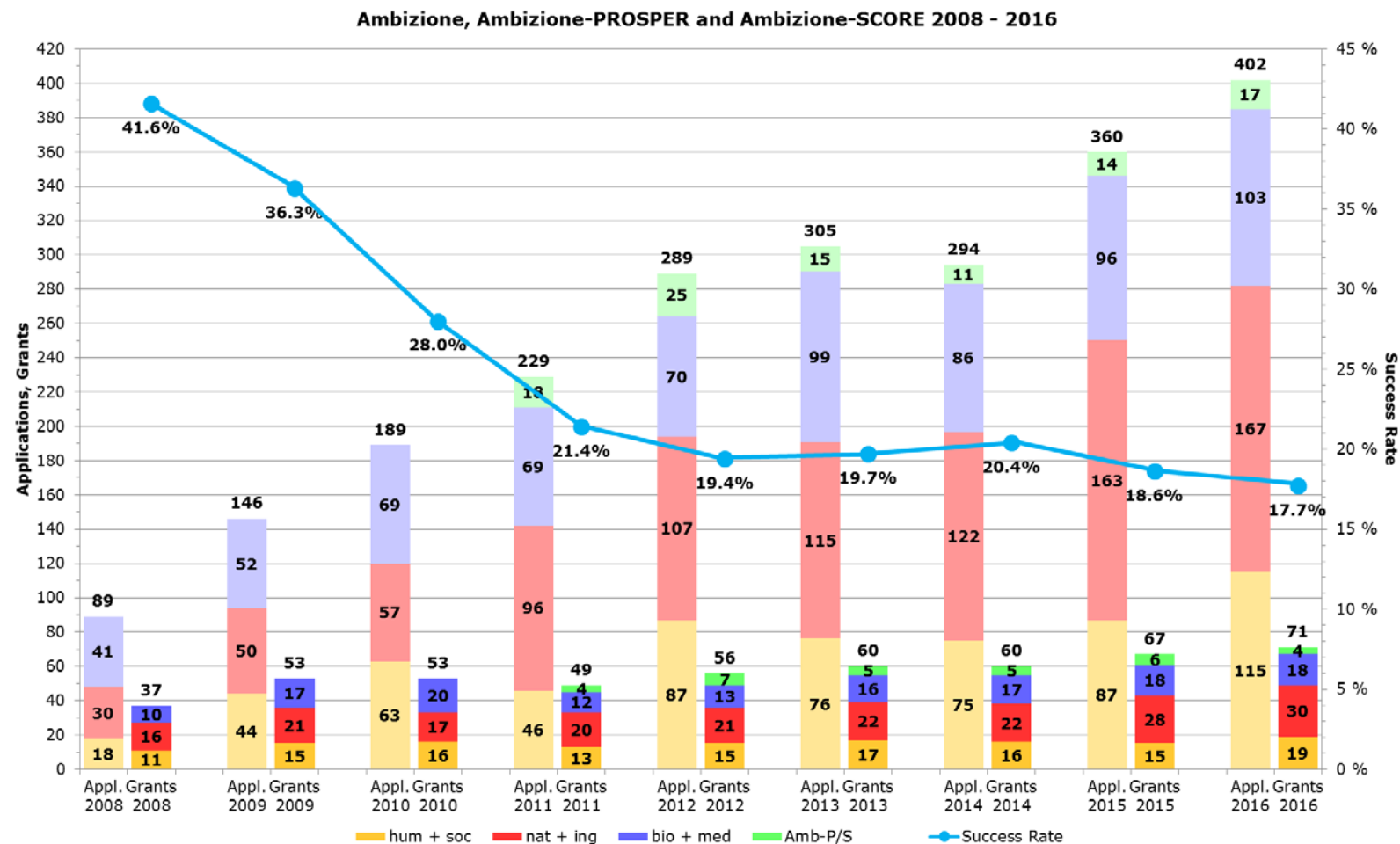
# Evolution of Success Rates

## Marie Heim Vögtlin (2008 – 2016)

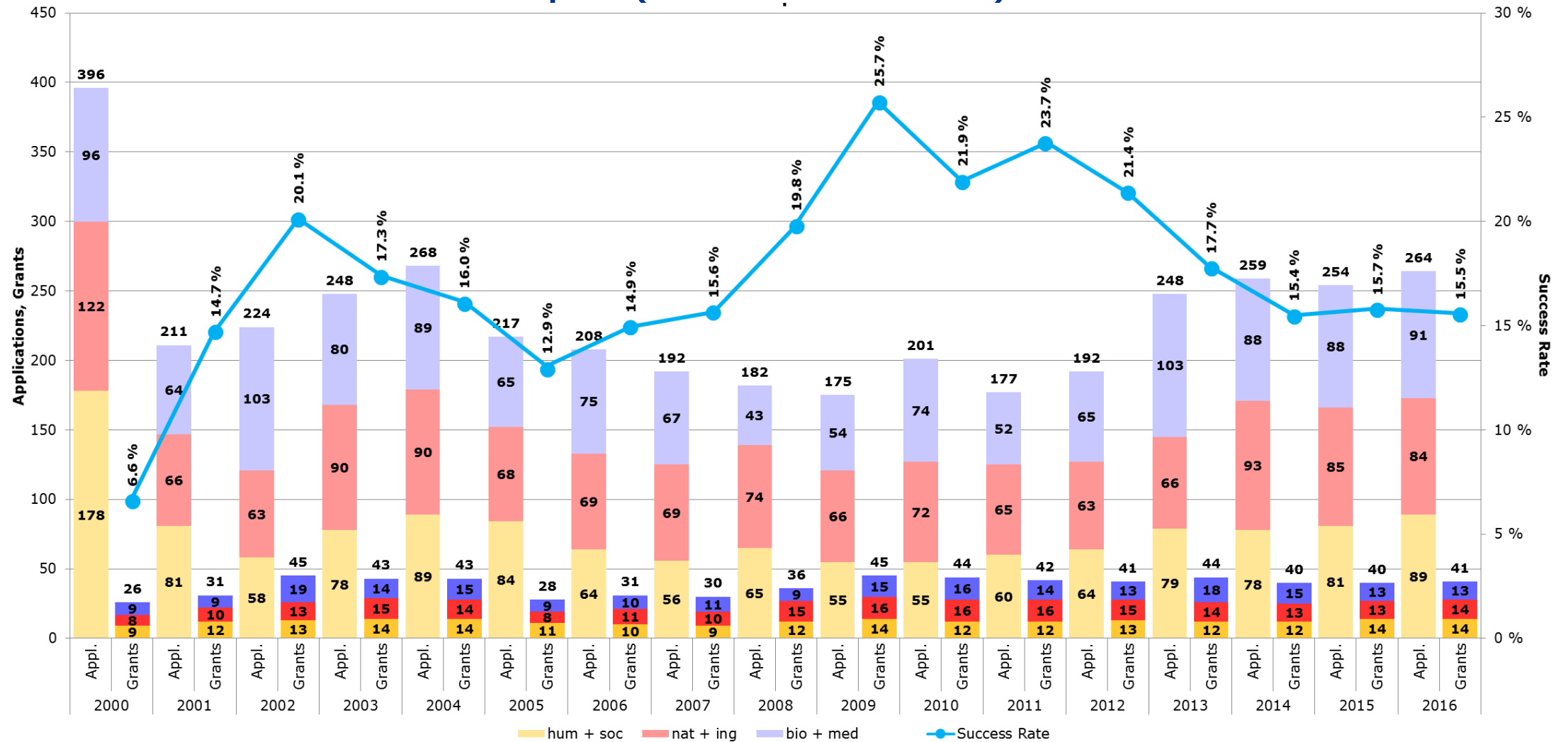
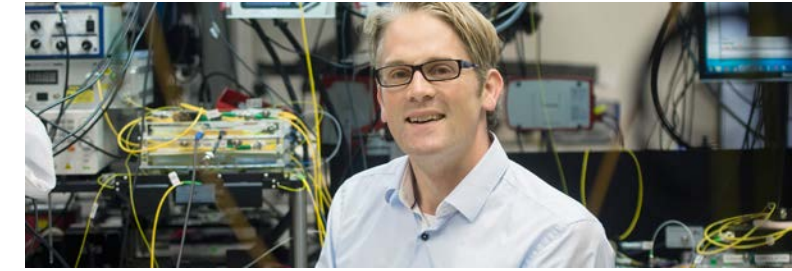




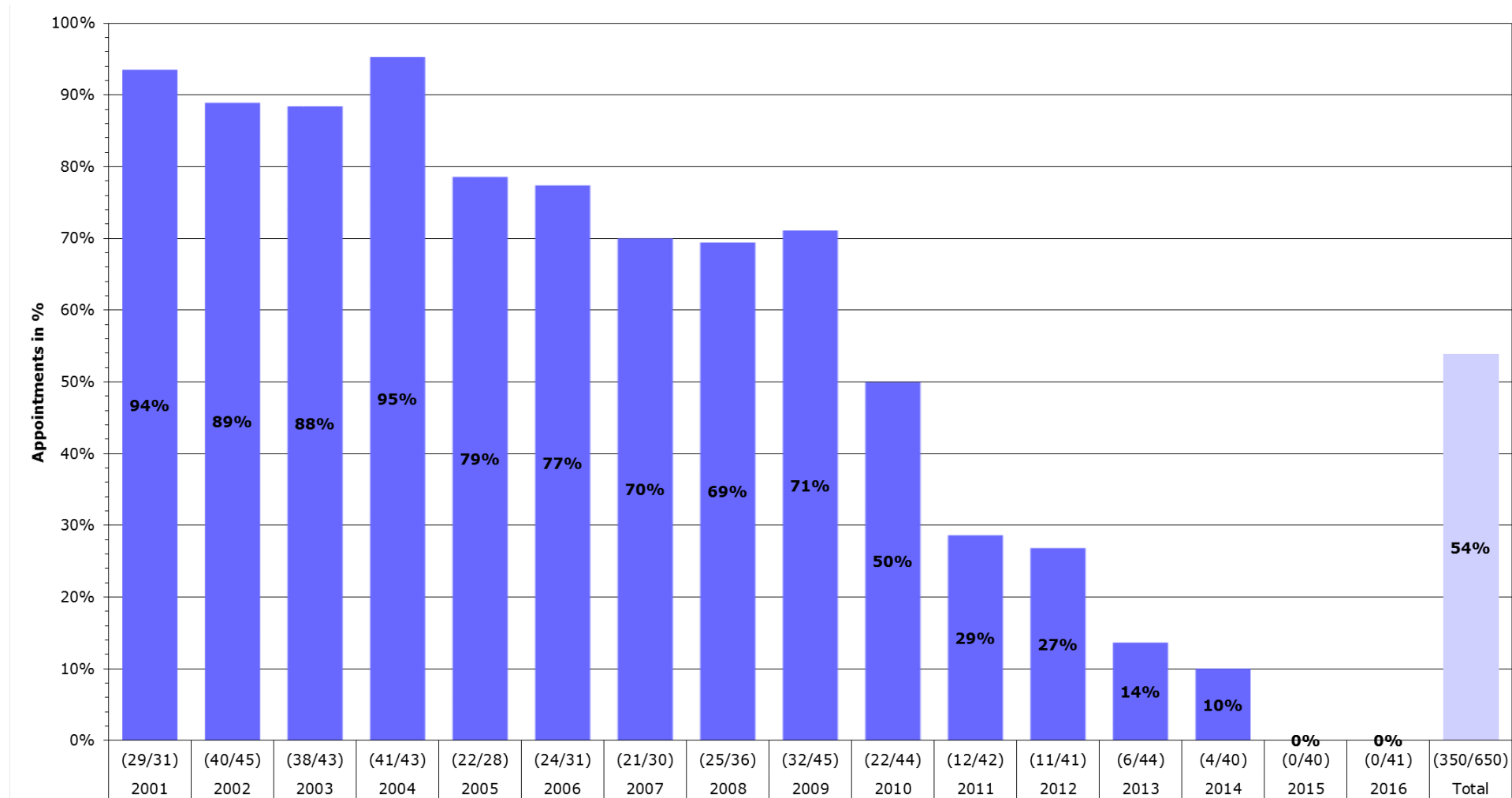
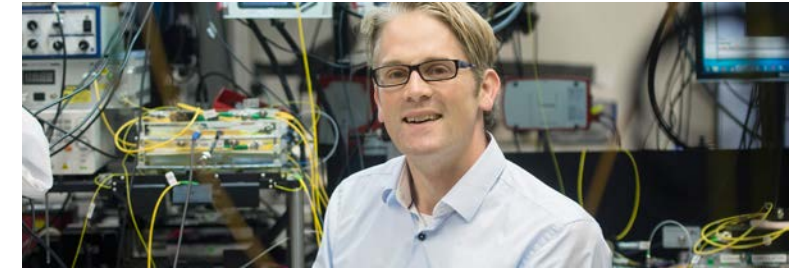
# Evolution of Success Rates Ambizione (2008 – 2016)



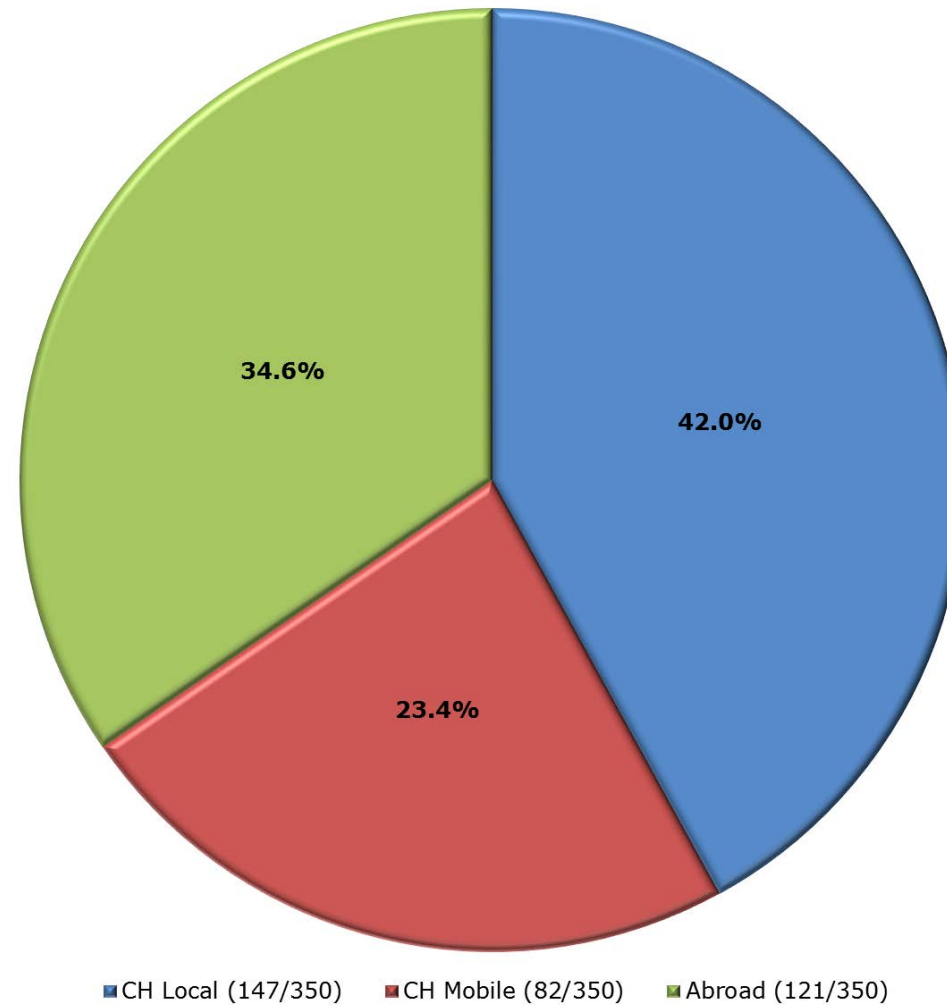
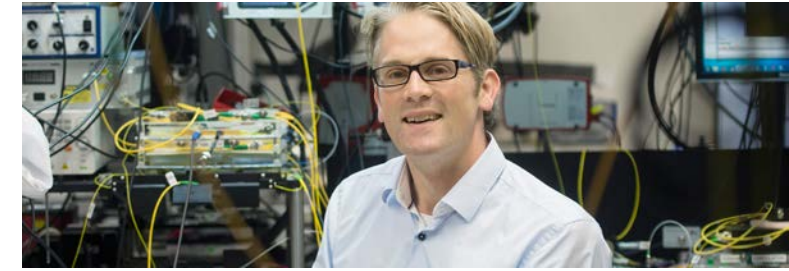
# Evolution of Success Rates SNSF Professorships (2000 – 2016)



# Outcome of SNSF Professorships: Appointment Rates (2000–2016)



# Outcome of SNSF Professorships: Place of Appointment (2000–2016)



# Multi-Year Programme 2017–2020



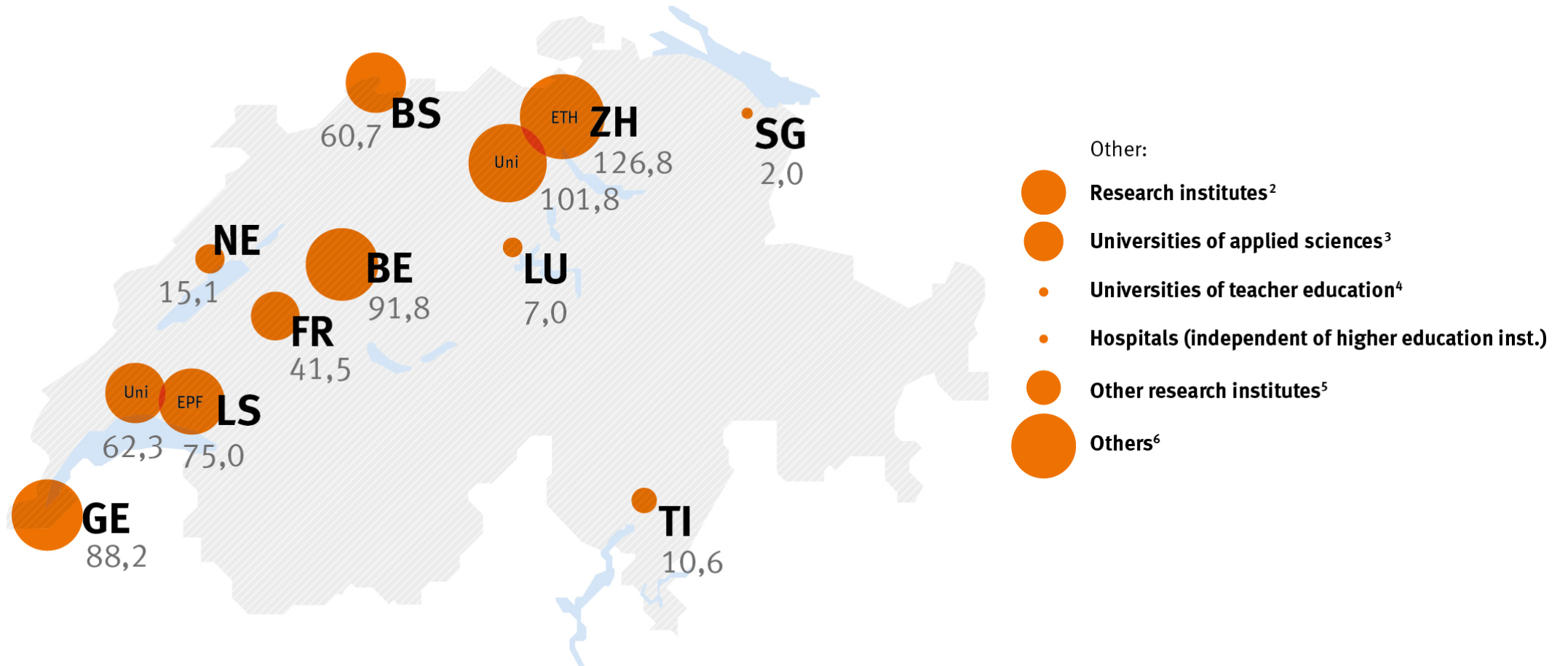
## Priority targets in career Funding

- Facilitate early independence for young researchers
- Clearer career prospects to encourage researchers to contemplate a career in academia
- Create clearer distinctions between the various schemes to focus more strongly on supporting academic careers



# Funding by Institution in Switzerland

Distribution of the approved amounts (in million. CHF, data 2016)







# Formulation of Scientific Knowledge

The SNSF definition of plagiarism includes:

The appropriation of another person's **results and findings** as one's own.

The copy without proper citation of another person's **formulation of scientific knowledge**.

# Consult the National Guidelines



Akademien der Wissenschaften Schweiz  
Académies suisses des sciences  
Accademie svizzere delle scienze  
Academias svizras da las ciencias  
Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences

## Wissenschaftliche Integrität

**Grundsätze und Verfahrensregeln**



# Mandatory Confirmation upon Submission



„The main applicant hereby confirms that the information given in all parts of this proposal including the attachments is correct. Documents were prepared in agreement with the persons involved and according to the standards of good scientific conduct. All information relevant to the proposal is presented unambiguously and completely. **Earlier work of the applicants and third parties is declared as such and publications of the applicants and of third parties are correctly cited.**“