

Solution-oriented Research for Development (SOR4D) Phase 2 (2026-2031)

New scientific knowledge and innovative approaches are required to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and generate solutions for poverty reduction in the Global South and East. International transdisciplinary research partnerships have the potential to generate such knowledge for more impact and build the capacity of researchers and institutions in partner countries. At the same time, a robust evidence base strengthens effective development cooperation.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) are launching a second phase of their flagship transdisciplinary development research programme: **Solution-oriented Research for Development (SOR4D)**. Building on Swiss expertise in innovation and excellence in research and international partnerships, the SOR4D programme aims at producing knowledge and innovative solutions through needs-driven, transdisciplinary research that generate impact and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in partner countries.

The call for proposals will be issued on 19th Jan 2026 on the [Open Calls webpage of the SNSF](#) (deadline for proposals: 18 May 2026).

Objective: The SOR4D programme aims to (1) generate **new knowledge** and **innovative solutions** for poverty reduction, humanitarian aid and sustainable development; (2) promote the application and scaling up of knowledge and solutions; (3) build the capacity of researchers and their institutions in partner countries (localisation); and (4) to increase the impact of international development cooperation.

Eligible consortia: The call is open to **consortia** composed of (1) Swiss researchers, and (2) researchers and (3) non-academic actors from ODA eligible countries. The **non-academic actors** are actors from policy and practice being part of the public or private sector in the local context where the projects are implemented. They are expected to contribute to defining the research needs/questions, to the research activities and to the dissemination and application of the research results at a larger scale.

The corresponding applicant (or main applicant) is a researcher employed for the entire duration of the project at a Swiss higher education or research institution, as defined in Articles 4 and 5 of the Federal Act on the Promotion of Research and Innovation. Non-academic actors and researchers that are based in an ODA recipient partner country act as co-applicants. Additional researchers that are based at a research institution in the Global North (except Switzerland) and non-academic actors from the global North can act as project partners. Additional researchers that are based at a Swiss research institution can be part of the applying team as co-applicants (if they fulfil the same eligibility criteria as the corresponding applicant).

Eligible countries: eligible countries are those listed by the [Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) as Official Development Assistance recipient countries. The focus lies on countries in the categories Least Developed Countries, Low Income Countries and Lower Middle Income Countries. Projects in Swiss International Cooperation priority regions and countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, are encouraged.

Themes of the call: In line with the International Cooperation Strategy 2025-28, projects shall contribute to one of its four objectives: **Human development; Sustainable economic development; Climate and environment; Peacebuilding and governance**. More information will follow in the call.

The SOR4D programme is open to all disciplines from the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, health and life sciences. It particularly encourages interdisciplinary collaboration between research domains where such collaboration is appropriate.

Transdisciplinary and transformative research: The SOR4D programme promotes transdisciplinary and transformative research for development among researchers and non-academic actors that is demand-driven and relevant to the local context and of global relevance. Transdisciplinary research (TDR) refers to a research approach in which scientific and societal actors collaborate to understand complex, real-world problems, develop practical, relevant solutions and facilitate real world impact. This takes place in a co-creative process, where problem definition, goal setting, and solution development are carried out jointly. The aim of TDR is not only to develop knowledge, but also to find ways to effectively address, solve or prevent problems.

Duration and volume of funding: Research projects within the framework of the SOR4D programme may last 36 months (3 years) or 48 months (4 years). The maximum budget is CHF 250'000 per year. At least 60% of the total project budget must be spent in the least developed, low income or lower middle income partner country/countries.

Selection Criteria: Successful projects will be selected based on the following elements:

1. Relevance, originality and topicality of the project;
2. Scientific quality and methods;
 1. Focus on innovative solutions and knowledge for impact, systemic change and scaling;
 2. Qualifications and complementary expertise of consortium members, [partnership approach](#);
 3. Gender sensitivity (including gender balance in the project team), intersectionality and social inclusion throughout the project;
 4. Explicit and realistic theory of change, Logical Framework, and a scale up strategy.

Timeline:

Launch of SOR4D call	19 January 2026
Submission of pre-proposals	18 May 2026
Invitation for full proposals	September 2026
Submission of full proposals	18 January 2027
Funding decisions by Research Council	April 2027
Start of SOR4D projects	May-Oct 2027

Past successes: The cooperation between the SNSF and SDC has led to many successful research projects and innovations, some of which are ongoing.

- [R4D](#) (2012-2014): 57 projects (in 50 countries); 744 peer-reviewed articles (Science, Nature, British Medical Journal, etc.); 760 conference participations; 204 researchers (156 from South) graduated with a Master or PhD; 115 follow up projects and spin offs. Successful projects include [Low Carbon Cement \(LC3\)](#), [Combacal](#), [Cocoboard](#), etc.
- [SOR4D](#) phase 1 (2021-2027): 15 ongoing transdisciplinary projects (agroecology, gender, governance, climate, water, sustainable value chains, health, education, waste management, etc.)

Additional information: You will find more information on www.sor4d.ch and on the SOR4D [LinkedIn](#) page. Final details will be disclosed in the call document. Webinars and information sessions will be organized on MS Teams (link below; **CET/Local Bern Time**):

- Wednesday, 28 January 2026 09:00-10:00 (UTC+01:00) in English
- Thursday, 29 January 2026 11:00-12:00 (UTC+01:00) in French
- Thursday, 29 January 2026 16:00-17:00 (UTC+01:00) in English

Link to register: [SOR4D 2nd phase call information webinar](#)

For additional questions, please contact sdcresearchdesk@eda.admin.ch