Early-Career Grants 2023/2024 – Call
Bilateral research cooperation with the Latin American Region 2021-2024

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has mandated the University of St.Gallen as the Leading House for the Latin American Region (LH) for the bilateral collaboration with partner institutions in Switzerland and Latin America for the period 2021-2024 and to explore new research in the region.

The Early-Career Grants aim to promote research in all Latin American countries and to support fieldwork in the region. This call is the second Early-Career Grant in the period 2021-2024. Grants up to CHF 7,000 will be awarded.

Aims and objectives
The Early-Career Grant, former Mobility Grant, specifically targets emerging researchers (PostDocs and PhD students). It allows for the integration of the next generation of scientists in international collaboration, helps to build new networks through personal contacts and mutual trust, and makes partnerships more sustainable. Furthermore, Early-Career Grants offer a possibility to encourage researchers to boost their studies with a stay and fieldwork in Latin America without being part of a team or academic group.

Eligibility and responsibility of project members
The call is open to researchers enrolled in Swiss institutions in a PhD or Postdoc program in any scientific discipline or field. All researchers of Swiss federal and cantonal universities, universities of applied sciences, universities of teachers’ education, and public research institutions are entitled to apply. Research institutions in Switzerland must be accredited by swissuniversities.

A researcher can apply to this call regardless of their nationality.

Researchers can apply, even if they have received other funding instruments or have pending applications. However, they must clearly state the other funding instruments supporting the project in the proposal and in the Application Form (online). In addition, applicants should accurately explain why they need this additional funding. The Leading House will most likely give preference to applicants without previous funding.

The project’s supervision by a Professor from a Swiss university or research institute is mandatory. The supervision of a Professor in the Latin American research stay country is desirable.

Funding and budgeting
Early-Career Grants are up to CHF 7,000 and will be disbursed after signing the grant contract.

All expenses must be justified and related to the proposed research activities. Third-party contributions should be indicated. The budget will be checked, and expenses might be cut if they are not calculated or justified correctly.

The grant received from the Leading House must be spent in one or several Latin American countries. The Early-Career Grant can only cover expenses outside of Latin America in exceptional cases and upon prior consultation with the Leading House team.
Administration of funds and reporting

Researchers must open a separate 'third-party account' at the home institution. If the researcher does not have an employment contract with the Swiss institution, the supervisor will be responsible for the project's finances and should act as a contact point between the institution and the Leading House.

The researcher is responsible for administrating the funds and reporting. They must submit a final Scientific and Financial Report one month after the termination of the Early-Career Grant project. The latest deadline for reporting will be on December 31, 2024.

Grantees must account for all expenses with a purchase receipt or invoice. Scanned copies must be presented to the Leading House with the final Financial Report. The originals are to remain with the researcher for 5 years after the termination of the agreement. Costs without or with insufficient receipts cannot be accepted. Credit card statements are not official receipts. If receipts cannot be provided, an official receipt book can be used.

Grant expenditures must adhere to the specific items of the budget. Shifts between individual budget items are permitted under the condition that they do not exceed 10% of the total budget. The Leading House's prior written approval is mandatory for any other intended budget changes.

Application

Applications shall be submitted in electronic format only. Please submit the complete application on the University of St.Gallen Leading House for the Latin American Region (LH) website according to the instructions. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the formal requirements are fulfilled, and the content is accurate and complete. Otherwise, the Leading House for the Latin American Region cannot consider the application.

All information provided in the administrative part and all uploaded documents must be written in English. To conduct the planned research stay successfully, applicants should demonstrate language skills.

Evaluation and selection of projects

Applications will be evaluated by the Leading House for the Latin American Region team and invited external experts, if necessary, and decided upon in a committee meeting. The LH distinguishes between formal eligibility criteria and evaluation criteria. Projects only qualify for funding if the eligibility criteria are fulfilled and will be finally selected based on the evaluation criteria.

The following evaluation criteria will apply in this call:

Relevance

– Researchers must demonstrate that the studied topics are relevant to the global agenda, especially for Switzerland and Latin America.
– The proposal must demonstrate the need for an international research stay for the project's success.

Academic originality and consistency

– An adequate state-of-the-art literature review and identification as well as justification of a research gap.
– Novel and clearly defined research question(s) and hypothesis.
– Comprehensive and detailed research method along with original and feasible proposed activities.
– The accuracy of the research plan and application.
– The feasibility and relevance of the expected impact, outputs, and scientific production (e.g., publication, thesis).
**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call launched</td>
<td>November 24, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deadline for submission:</strong></td>
<td><strong>January 31, 2024</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and funding decision:</td>
<td>February – April 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification</td>
<td>April 12, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>April 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earliest project start:</td>
<td>May 1, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research stay</td>
<td>Up to 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latest project end:</td>
<td>November 30, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project report due:</td>
<td>One month after the end of the research stay (latest, December 31, 2024)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher must conduct the project within a maximum of 3 months in a 7-month period. It can start at the earliest in May 2024 and must be finished at the latest in November 2024.
Annexe I: Guidelines for writing the Scientific Proposal

Please provide all the information listed below in a separate document (max 2,000 words). To ensure a blind peer-review process, do not make explicit references to the researcher’s name; the project proposal needs to be anonymous.

1) **Project title and abstract:** The abstract should be a maximum of half a page and include objectives, research plan, methodology, expected results, and purpose of the research stay.

2) **Relevance and justification:** The proposal should be relevant to Switzerland and Latin America and demonstrate the need for the research stay.

3) **State of the art and research gap:** Briefly describe the current state of the art in research and identify a research gap: include the main research question(s) and hypothesis.

4) **Research plan, methods, and timeframe:** Include approach and methodology, milestones and timeframe of feasible proposed activities. The research stay must happen in 3 months in a seven-month window (May – November 2024).

5) **Expected results and follow-up:** Explain the expected impact, output, scientific production, follow-up activities, and the possibility of a long-term collaboration with the Latin American host university or supervisor.

6) **Former, pending, or ongoing grants:** Provide details about the existence of other funding instruments that are supporting (or have supported) this project.

7) **Bibliography:** the list of references does not count for the 2,000 words limit.

The proposal must be uploaded to the Leading House website together with the following:

- **Budget**
- **CV** Curriculum Vitae and publications (max. 2 pages)

Budget must be submitted in excel format, using the template provided on the website.
CV and proposal must be submitted in PDF format.
Annexe II: Guidelines for preparing the budget

- Travel expenses of up to CHF 2,200 (round trips) per person may be granted. It covers all travel expenses per person to Latin America (e.g., flights, car, train, bus). Travel insurance, as well as costs for a visa, can be covered within this limit. COVID-19 tests that are mandatory to travel can be covered. Travel expenses that surpass this limit will only be covered as an exception and must be thoroughly justified.

- The Early-Career Grant can only cover economy-class flights and public transport tickets. Car rental, taxi and Uber rides will only be covered as an exception and must be thoroughly justified.

- Costs for accommodation and consumables can be granted. Please indicate the estimated costs in detail. For accommodation and consumables, a maximum of CHF 100 per diem may be granted.

- As a result of the project, costs for publication can be financed.

- For flights, accommodation, and other project’s expenses, a purchase receipt must be provided.

**Specification of costs that cannot be covered**

- Salaries

- Conference rooms and other infrastructure. Should be provided by the host universities (in-kind contribution).

- Hardware and other equipment usually provided by universities.
Contact
University of St.Gallen
Institute of Management in Latin America (GIMLA-HSG)
Leading House for the Latin American Region
Müller-Friedberg-Strasse 6/8
CH - 9000 St.Gallen
+41 71 224 27 36
leadinghouse@unisg.ch
gimla.unisg.ch/en/leading-house/funding-instruments

Dr. Letícia Vargas, Program Manager
leticia.vargasbento@unisg.ch

Andrea Güpfert, Program Administrator
leadinghouse.admin@unisg.ch

Prof. Dr. Vanessa Boanada, Program Director
vanessa.boanada@unisg.ch