

**Summary of the Mid Term Report by  
Ecole polytechniques fédérale de Lausanne  
on the  
Brazilian - Swiss Joint Research Programme (BSJRP)  
<http://cooperation.epfl.ch/page71377.html>**

## **Background and Goals**

Designated by the Swiss Federal Council as one of the countries with great potential for scientific and technological development, Brazil was included by the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER) in the list of priority countries for the 2008-2011 period.

In 2009, the Brazilian Minister of Science and Technology, Sergio Machado Rezende, visited Switzerland with a high ranking scientific delegation. On this occasion, an Action Plan outlining the Brazilian Swiss science and technology strategy for 2008-2011 was signed on 29 September 2009 by the Swiss Federal Council and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil. The areas of cooperation (neurosciences, health, energy and environment), the instruments (joint research projects, exchange and mobility of researchers, post-doctoral scholarships) and joint funding methods were defined in the Action Plan.

On the Swiss side, the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER), represented by the Cooperation@epfl unit (EPFL), and on the Brazilian side, the Ministry of Science and Technology, represented by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), are responsible for implementing and monitoring the programme in their own country.

To date, one type of funding tool has been implemented: a call for proposals entitled “Brazilian Swiss Joint Research Partnership” (JRP) was opened to all Swiss higher education institutions. The call was launched on 13 November 2009, with a deadline of 15 January 2010.

According to the Action Plan, the main tools used to develop and structure the projects include joint research projects in the above-mentioned fields as well as the following related activities:

- Joint conferences and workshops
- Academic visits by students and researchers involved in the project to the partner institute

The JRP call for proposals is intended to promote research cooperation with clearly defined objectives involving at least one Swiss and one Brazilian scientist. Joint projects must be based on the principles of scientific excellence, reciprocity, mutual benefits, mutual respect and sustainability. Projects involving inter- and multi-disciplinary research teams are highly encouraged.

## **Achievements**

Among the 20 proposals submitted in January 2010 to the Coordination Office at EPFL (i.e. the Cooperation@epfl unit), 10 projects received total grant funding amounting to CHF 2,525,474 (€ 1,864,013.36) by both countries. Based on the matching fund principle, Switzerland will provide roughly 70% of this amount (i.e. CHF 1,837,876). On the Swiss side, each project was reviewed by two international and independent experts, specialists in their discipline. The final decision was jointly taken by the Brazilian and Swiss authorities.

EPF Lausanne (incl. a joint project with UNI Genève)	4
UNI Lausanne (incl. CHUV)	3
ETH Zurich	2
Uni Basel	1

Neurosciences	4
Health	4
Energy	1
Environment	1

## Outlook

If the maximum amount proposed by the Swiss authorities is finally invested (CHF 3.5 million), the balance remaining (i.e. CHF 1'662'124) could be then dedicated to the Brazilian Swiss Joint Research Programme for the end of the period. From a funding standpoint, the projects will end in December 2011 at the latest. If a second call for Joint Research Partnership proposals is launched, the following instruments could be put into effect:

### *- Institutional Partnership Grants (IP)*

After the Joint Research Partnership, another funding instrument could be implemented before the end of the 2008-2011 programme. This could be the Institutional Partnership (IP) Grant that is commonly used by other SER Leading Houses and Coordination Offices. This type of grant provides seed money to encourage broad-based interactions between two institutions. The purpose of such interactions should be long-term cooperation initiatives in education or research. Restrictions to priority fields could be applied to this funding tool (i.e. based on the Action Plan: health, neurosciences, environment, and energy).

The IP Grant should be used to encourage initial contact between partner institutions; research cooperation initiatives may be part of an IP project but should not be its main purpose. IP activities may include, but are not limited to, academic exchanges (such as exchange of professors for lectures and/or seminars), joint courses, joint scientific workshops, etc. Funding for exchange students will be limited to research students. Exchange of staff should be limited to short-term stays at the partner institutes.

### *- Faculty and Staff Exchange Grants (FE/SE)*

Faculty and Staff Exchange (FE/SE) Grants could also be implemented. Faculty exchange grants could thus be designed to encourage dialogue between Swiss and Brazilian scholars (faculty members and research staff) in all disciplines, to facilitate personal and technical development, and to promote international cooperation. In such cases, grant applications should be welcomed from all fields. Researchers from all disciplines should also be encouraged to apply. Although flexible, projects funded by this type of grant are usually limited to a period of three months.

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