

Advanced Manufacturing Technology Transfer Centers (AM-TTC)

Guideline for the Application Process for Funding (Second Call)

1 General information

In 2018, key players from academia, industry and politics launched the initiative to establish a network of Advanced Manufacturing Technology Transfer Centers (AM-TTC) in Switzerland. The aim of the initiative is to build up capabilities and infrastructures to facilitate and accelerate the transfer of new and promising manufacturing technologies from academia into industrial applications. The AM-TTC initiative is supported by the ETH Board as well as by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

In the first call in 2018, two technology transfer centers – ANAXAM and the Swiss m4m Center – were selected and funded by the ETH Board as well as by the federal authorities according to Art. 15 RIPA. However, there is a need for more such technology transfer centers (hereinafter called “Centers”). Therefore, we have issued this second call for Center proposals. The aim is to establish two or three additional Centers in Switzerland and thereby to further expand the scope of the initiative already during the period 2021 to 2024. Such additional Centers shall enable the successful transfer of further advanced manufacturing technologies into the Swiss industry.

In this document, you will find important information and deadlines for the preparation and submission of applications of Centers to become a member of the AM-TTC network and to apply for funding for a period starting in the second half of 2022 until the end of 2024.

2 Evaluation and decision processes and role of the Alliance

The initiative is coordinated by an association, the AM-TTC Alliance (hereinafter called “Alliance”), as governing body of the network of Centers. The board of directors of the Alliance consists of leaders from science and industry in Switzerland. The Alliance decides about the granting of the ETH Board funds. In addition, the Alliance has been mandated by the SERI to evaluate the requests of planned Centers that apply for federal funding according to Art. 15 RIPA (Federal Act on the Promotion of Research and Innovation) and to prepare funding recommendations for the SERI. The Center proposals will also be evaluated by the Swiss Science Council (SSC), which is mandated by the SERI to evaluate all requests for funding under Art. 15 RIPA.

The Centers must prepare and submit proposal documents. These proposal documents will be the basis and main information for the evaluation of Centers and for the decisions about the financial support of the Centers. In addition to the proposal documents for the evaluation of their requests, the Centers must submit their applications for federal funding individually and directly to the SERI. The head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER) will finally decide – upon proposal of the SERI – about the financial support of a Center under Art. 15 RIPA individually and according to the general rules and the process that are defined in the RIPA.

3 Schedule

The application process and the deadlines follow the necessity to submit the proposals and the funding requests of the Centers as well as the funding recommendations of the Alliance and the SSC to the SERI in the first half of 2022 to enable the selected Centers to start their activities in the second half of 2022.

Dates	Activity	Who
13.09.2021	Publish the guideline of the proposal preparation and submission	Alliance
9 weeks	<i>Preparation of a Sketch of the planned Center and a letter of intent (LOI)</i>	Centers
12.11.2021	Submit the <i>Sketch and LOI</i> to the Alliance	Centers
4 weeks	<i>Evaluation of submitted Sketches and LOIs</i>	Alliance
10.12.2021	Discuss evaluation and select Centers that shall prepare a <i>Full Proposal</i>	Alliance
1 week	<i>Prepare evaluation reports</i>	Alliance
17.12.2021	Inform the Centers about evaluation / invitation to prepare a <i>Full Proposal</i>	Alliance
12 weeks	<i>Preparation of a Full Proposal</i>	Centers
11.03.2022	Submit the <i>Full Proposal</i> to the Alliance	Centers
11.03.2022	Submit the <i>Application for Federal Funding</i> to the SERI	Centers
4 weeks	<i>Evaluation of the Full Proposals of the Centers</i>	Alliance
15.04.2022	Discuss evaluation and select proposals recommended for funding	Alliance
1 week	<i>Prepare evaluation reports and funding recommendations</i>	Alliance
22.04.2022	Inform Centers and SERI about evaluation and funding recommendations	Alliance
1 week	<i>Prepare documents for the evaluation by the SSC</i>	SERI
29.04.2022	Send Center proposals and evaluation results of the Alliance to the SSC	SERI
5 weeks	<i>Review of Center proposals and evaluation results of the Alliance</i>	SSC
03.06.2022	Inform SERI about the review results and SSC funding recommendations	SSC
4 weeks	<i>Review of funding requests and recommendations</i>	SERI
30.06.2022	Inform Centers about funding decisions	SERI*

* in coordination with the Alliance; SERI = State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation; SSC = Swiss Science Council

4 Documents

The schedule above mentions a number of documents that must be prepared and submitted in the application process. These documents are needed to evaluate the applications and plans of the Centers, to prepare funding recommendations for the SERI and to decide about the granting of funds. Below you will find general descriptions of the required documents and information how the documents need to be prepared.

4.1 Sketch and Letter of Intent (Sketch and LOI)

4.1.1 Objective of the document

The main objective of the *Sketch and LOI* is to inform the Alliance that a consortium of partners intends to establish a Center and to apply for funding. In addition, the document should provide general information about the planned Center. The *Sketch and LOI* will be the basis for further discussions between the Alliance and the Center. The aim of these discussions is to guide and consult the Center in taking further steps to meet the criteria that will be used to evaluate the Center's application and to support the Center in preparing the *Full Proposal* and the *Application for Federal Funding*.

4.1.2 Content of the document

The *Sketch and LOI* should provide information about the following topics:

- Focus areas of the Center in advanced manufacturing
- Competences and infrastructure that will be established in the Center
- Potential partners of the Center and their role and commitment

4.1.3 Form, language and size of the document

- There will be no specific template for the *Sketch and LOI*.
- The *Sketch and LOI* should be written in English (preferred language), German or French.
- The *Sketch and LOI* should be short and not exceed **five pages**.

4.1.4 Submission of the documents

The *Sketch and LOI* must be submitted and signed by the responsible body of the Center or – in case the Center is not yet officially established as legal entity – by a key partner in the consortium of the Center.

The *Sketch and LOI* must be submitted as PDF file to the Alliance by **12 November 2021** (see contact details in section 5).

4.2 Full Proposal

4.2.1 Objective of the document

The objective of the *Full Proposal* is to provide detailed information about the planned Center that enable the Alliance, the SSC, the SERI and other reviewers of submitted proposals to evaluate the Center's application according to the defined evaluation criteria. The *Full Proposal* will be a key document and input to prepare the funding recommendations for the SERI and to decide whether a Center will be funded.

4.2.2 Content of the document

The *Full Proposal* consists of a main document and several annexes. The main document of the *Full Proposal* must provide detailed information about the following topics:

- Focus areas of the Center in advanced manufacturing
- Gap in currently available technology transfer infrastructures that should be closed by the Center
- Main goals to be achieved by establishing the Center
- Competences and capabilities that will be established in the Center, including its workforce
- Knowledge and technology transfer strategy of the Center
- Specific infrastructure that will be operated by the Center, e.g. pilot plants, machines and equipment
- Organization structure and management of the Center, including legal form, bodies and key personnel of the legally independent entity
- Sites and facilities of the Center, including already existing buildings and infrastructures
- Business environment of the Center that supports and facilitates the activities of the Center
- Collaboration models with higher education institutions and services offered to science and industry partners
- Partners of the Center, their competences, roles and commitments to fund the Center
- Mid- and long-term business plan of the Center, including the key steps to establish and develop the Center, a financial plan for the period 2022 to 2024 and information about how to continue the business of the Center beyond the initial funding period 2022-2024.

In addition to the main document of the *Full Proposal*, the following documents must be provided as annexes of the *Full Proposal*.

- Bylaws and internal regulations of the Center
- List of the members of the executive and advisory bodies of the Center, e.g. Board of Directors, Executive Board or Advisory Council, as well as the name of the Statutory Auditor
- CVs of key personnel of the Center
- Personnel plan with information about functions and number of employees
- *Financial Plan* for the years 2022 to 2024 and for the years 2025 to 2028.

4.2.3 *Form, language and size of the documents*

- The *Full Proposal* as well as the *Financial Plan* must be prepared using the corresponding templates, which will be provided by the Alliance together with the invitation to prepare a Full Proposal.
- The main document of the *Full Proposal* must be written in English.
- The annexes of the *Full Proposal* can be prepared in English (preferred language), German or French.
- The main document of the *Full Proposal* should not exceed **20 pages**.

4.2.4 *Submission of the documents*

The *Full Proposal* **must be submitted by the independent non-profit-oriented legal entity** of the Center. The document must be signed by representatives of this legal entity who are authorized to sign for the Center. In case that the legal entity has not yet been established, but it is planned to establish it until end of June 2022, one or several partners or future shareholders of the entity need to submit and sign the *Full Proposal*.

The *Full Proposal*, meaning the main document and its annexes, must be submitted as PDF files to the Alliance by **11 March 2022** (see contact details in section 5). In case that the documents which are mentioned in section 4.2.2 as annexes of the *Full Proposal* will not have been agreed and approved by the Center and its partners by this date, the preliminary versions of these documents must be provided in order to enable the evaluation of the submitted *Full Proposal*. However, these preliminary versions must be replaced by fully approved documents by the end of June 2022 the latest. The fully approved documents must be provided to the Alliance as well as to the *SERI* to apply for federal funding.

4.3 **Application for Federal Funding**

4.3.1 *Objective of the document*

The *Application for Federal Funding* is the official document to apply for federal funding under Art. 15 RIPA. The document respectively the annexes of the document must contain the information that is needed by *SERI* to consider the application and the requested funding in the planning period 2021-2024.

4.3.2 *Content of the document*

The *Application for Federal Funding* must provide the following information:

- Name of the Center
- Contact information of the Center, including address, phone and e-mail
- Address for payment of the Center
- Statutory Auditor of the Center
- Director of the Center, including name, address, phone and e-mail
- Requested funding per year and in total for the period 2022 to 2024
- Name and size of the provided annexes (*Full Proposal* including its annexes)

The *Full Proposal*, meaning the main document and its annexes, needs to be provided as an annex of the *Application for Federal Funding*.

4.3.3 Form, language and size of the document

- The *Application for Federal Funding* should be prepared using the corresponding template of the SERI, which will be provided by the Alliance together with the invitation to prepare a Full Proposal.
- The *Application for Federal Funding* can be prepared in English, German or French
- The *Application for Federal Funding* (without its annexes) is a **one-page** document.

4.3.4 Submission of the documents

The *Application for Federal Funding* must be submitted by the independent non-profit-oriented legal entity of the Center. The document must be signed by representatives of this legal entity who are authorized to sign for the Center.

The *Application for Federal Funding* including its annexes must be submitted as unbound and not tacked printout as well as PDF files to the SERI by **11 March 2022** (see contact details in section 5).

5 Contact persons and information

5.1 AM-TTC Alliance

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