Early-Career Fellowships, Collegium Helveticum, Zurich

Zürich, Sep 1, 2027–Jun 30, 2028
Application deadline: Feb 11, 2027

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Early-career fellows are free to pursue their individual projects as outlined in their application, and they receive support from the Collegium's team. Projects carried out at the Collegium may convince both by their relevance and originality, spanning from blue-sky research to applied science, as well as from fine arts to artistic research. The Collegium also encourages small interdisciplinary teams of up to three people to apply with a joint project.

Applications for the fellow year 2027–2028 can be submitted until February 11, 2027 (17:00 CET).

About the fellowship
Early-career fellows are working in academic or artistic disciplines at postdoctoral or equivalent level for art school graduates, in cases where the institution does not award doctoral degrees. We invite international applications as well as applications from scholars and artists currently affiliated with one of the Collegium's supporting institutions, ETH Zurich, the University of Zurich, and the Zurich University of the Arts. The Collegium welcomes diversity and is committed to provide a family friendly workplace. Therefore, we acknowledge care work, part-time employment, or career breaks and consider applications proposing joint research in job-sharing.

With its early-career fellowship program, the Collegium nurtures an environment for promising academics and artists at a critical stage of their career. The program supports courageous projects that cut across and transgress disciplinary boundaries in unconventional ways. As part of their application, each fellow proposes an interdisciplinary event centered on their work, contributing to the Collegium's academic and artistic program.

The fellowship can also be used to further develop a well-conceived and clearly defined project proposal into an interdisciplinary proposal for a major grant, such as an ERC or SNSF Starting Grant, or an SNSF Ambizione Grant. The fellowship is not designed to support the initial formulation of ideas or projects that are still at a very early stage, nor is it intended to support doctoral dissertations. We also consider joint project applications from small interdisciplinary teams of up to three people.

Please find more information about the types of projects and candidates we are seeking on our website.

Eligibility
Applicants must hold a doctoral degree in an academic discipline, or a master's degree from an

art school in cases where doctoral degrees are not awarded. Eligibility is based on the certified date of the PhD defense (or equivalent degree) and the start date of the fellowship, i.e. September 1 of the fellowship's starting year. Applicants must fall within an academic age of five years, which—based on the information they provide—is automatically calculated in the application platform. Academic age refers to the cumulative equivalent of no more than five years of full-time employment following the qualifying degree; it is therefore not simply the number of calendar years that have passed since the degree was awarded. Periods of part-time employment are calculated proportionally — for example, two years of employment at 50 percent count as one year of academic age. When calculating this five-year period, factors such as parental or care responsibilities, career breaks, part-time employment, and other relevant circumstances are taken into account. Applicants who wish to make a claim against the five-year threshold must provide supporting documentation.
In all cases, the qualifying degree must have been awarded no more than eight years before the start of the fellowship, i.e. September 1 of the fellowship's starting year.

Official confirmation of the completed doctoral degree from the respective university, or doctoral or master's degree from an art school (if the institution does not award doctoral degrees) is required and must be submitted with the application. If you do not have a certificate by the time of application, please submit either a transcript of record that confirms that you received a doctorate or master's degree from an art school, or a letter by your advisor or department chair confirming that you will have your doctorate or master's degree from an art school in hand by June of the fellowship's starting year. A PhD certificate or equivalent is required at least three months prior to the start of the fellowship to ensure that all paperwork can be processed in a timely manner.

Associate fellow
Early-career fellows require the support from an established researchers or artists affiliated with one of the supporting universities, ETH Zurich, the University of Zurich, or the Zurich University of the Arts, who is willing to become an associate fellow and who will serve as their academic partner during the fellowship. You may name up to two associate fellows. Each of them must accept the role in eResearch, otherwise you cannot submit your application. Applicants are advised to initiate contact and obtain support well in advance. When you contact a potential associate fellow, please send them this link, which explains the associate fellow's role in the application process and during the fellowship. If you encounter troubles in securing the support of a local faculty member, please consult the FAQs.

Role and eligibility of associate fellows
Associate fellows are usually tenured or tenure-track faculty. If this is not the case, two associate fellows may jointly support an early-career fellow with a co-signed letter of support. In such cases, one of the co-signers must hold the rank of professor or department chair. Associate fellows may agree to integrate early-career fellows into their group part-time and provide infrastructure for their project.

Limitations
Applicants must not have been employed under the direct supervision of the potential associate fellow within the twelve months prior to the start of the fellowship.

Each associate fellow may support only one application in a specific field. A second application

can be supported only if it is in a clearly distinct field.

Letter of support
At the application stage, potential associate fellows are required to provide a very short assessment and confirm their willingness to provide a letter of support if the candidate is long-listed. Once a potential associate fellow is added to eResearch, they will receive an automated email that prompts them to access the system to confirm their support and give an initial assessment.

If the application advances to the next stage, potential associate fellows will be invited to submit a full letter of support. Such a letter of support should provide an assessment of the applicant and their project. In addition, the letter should detail why and how the associate fellow will support the early-career fellow's project and how they can help to build links with Zurich's academic and art communities.

Adding associate fellows to your application
Associate fellows can be named as part of the application process on the application platform eResearch. As a first step, you only need to enter the associate fellow's contact details.

Important: If you invite an ETH Zurich member as an associate fellow to your application, please make sure to add the contact with the short ETH Zurich email address (e.g. username@ethz.ch). If you're unsure about the correct email address, check with your potential associate fellow beforehand.

General information
Employment
Early-career fellows are employed full-time as postdoctoral researchers at ETH Zurich for the duration of the fellowship. The fellowship stipend is based on ETH Zurich salary rates for postdoctoral researchers. It currently totals approximately CHF 75,000 to CHF 85,000 for the ten months and is paid in monthly installments. Early-career fellows are eligible to receive up to CHF 2,000 to support travel and research expenses. As ETH Zurich employees, early-career fellows who take care of children of minor age or children in education may apply for a family allowance.

The fellowship requires full-time commitment. In exceptional cases, applicants employed by another institution must obtain and provide official documentation confirming that they will be on unpaid leave for the entire fellowship period.

Duration and start date
Early-career fellows spend ten months at the Collegium, starting on September 1 until June 30 of the respective academic year.

Infrastructure
Early-career fellows are provided with a desk, access to IT and library infrastructure as well as a computer if required. Since the Collegium cannot provide laboratory infrastructure or studio space on site, early-career fellows in exceptional cases can arrange to use up to 40 percent of their weekly working time to do work outside of the Semper Observatory if this is essential for the proposed project or furthers their skills in important ways. Usually, such arrangements would be made in close cooperation with the associate fellow and require approval by the Collegium's director. Fel-

lows also have access to the universities' sport and activity programs.

Attendance and participation
Early-career fellows are required to be present at the Collegium on weekdays to facilitate informal exchange. They participate in the regular seminars, workshop discussions, and Jours Fixes with other fellows and present and discuss their ongoing work. Early-career fellows contribute to the Collegium's academic and artistic program by organizing an event related to their fellowship project, for which they will receive organizational and financial support of up to CHF 8,000. Typical formats for events are workshops, lectures, panel discussions, exhibitions, or performances but there are no specific limitations set by the Collegium.

In addition to the twenty days of vacation during the ten-month fellowship, ten days may be used for research-related travel.

Note for international applicants
Early-career fellows are employed at ETH Zurich for the duration of their fellowship and need a valid work and residence permit for Switzerland. Our partners at ETH Human Resources provide support throughout this process. However, please obtain information about the requirements as early as possible. Information is available on the ETH Zurich services and resources page. The Collegium cannot provide housing for its early-career fellows. You can find information regarding housing in Zurich on the page of the joint housing office of the University of Zurich and ETH Zurich.

Application
Applications for the fellow year 2027–2028 can be submitted until February 11, 2027 (17:00 CET). Online interviews with applicants advancing to the next stage of the assessment are expected to take place on April 20 and 21, 2027. Please make sure to reserve these dates.

Use of generative artificial intelligence
The use of generative AI in the preparation of an early-career fellowship is permitted in principle, but at the applicant's own risk. It must be fully disclosed in the text box below by providing detailed information about which generative AI tools were used, for what purpose, and to what extent, whether in writing the application, creating illustrations, or collecting and analyzing data. Applicants are fully responsible for the content and accuracy of their fellowship application.

Please note that the use of generative AI tools may raise concerns regarding intellectual property and scientific misconduct. Applicants are fully responsible for the content and accuracy of their fellowship application. They must adhere to the principles of research integrity that apply at ETH Zurich. Since this extends to any and all parts of an application produced by an AI tool, applicants must ensure that all sources are cited appropriately and correctly, and that the documents do not contain factually incorrect, misleading, falsified, plagiarized, or fabricated information.

The Collegium Helveticum directorate therefore advises applicants to exercise maximum caution when using generative AI or AI-assisted technologies in the development of their fellowship applications.

Textboxes on eResearch

Applications can only be submitted via eResearch as of November 16, 2026. To assist with preparation, please find information below regarding submission requirements, text length, and other relevant details. The download section also provides a step-by-step instruction guide for submitting your application through eResearch.

Applicants must submit all application materials in a single submission. The assessment takes place in two stages:

1. Initial review: Only the synopsis section of the application form will be assessed. It should therefore include the information most relevant to evaluating your proposed project and narrative CV, as well as your response to the question “Why the Collegium Helveticum?”

2. Full assessment: The other materials will be considered only if your application advances to the next stage.

Synopsis section
Narrative CV and key contributions (max 500 words)
List your key contributions to your field and your professional context.
Project (max 500 words)
Title/subtitle, 3-5 key words, aim(s) of project (max 50 words), summary of project.
Why is the Collegium the ideal place? (max 250 words)
Why is the Collegium the right place to carry out your proposed project, and how can you and your project contribute to and benefit from its interdisciplinary environment?
For full submission
Description of event (max 350 words)
Please outline an event with interdisciplinary character related to your proposed project that is feasible within the maximum budget. Also explain how you, your project, and the Collegium would benefit from the event.
Event budget
Please create a budget for the planned event, organized into the following categories: materials and consumables, accommodation, travel, and other. The Collegium retains up to CHF 8,000 per fellow to cover the costs of the fellow’s planned event(s).
Use this sample budget to estimate costs.
PDF upload
Completed project proposal
Download the template here.
Curriculum vitae
Including full list of publications and other relevant output.
Copy of your highest degree certificate
Doctoral degree or, for art schools, an equivalent master's degree.
Passport/ID
Please prepare a PDF copy of the relevant pages of your passport. Swiss and EU/EFTA citizens can alternatively submit a copy of their ID (front and back).
Supplementary information
Additional information to support claims regarding academic age.
Do not upload other additional materials including portfolios or writing samples.

We ask for your understanding that we can only consider complete applications.

Download documents
Project proposal form
Information regarding the type of projects and individuals we are seeking for early-career fellowships.
Budget sample for event planning.
Details on the timeline of the process and the selection procedure.
Instructions on how to submit your application on eReseach.
Fact sheet early-career fellowship application
Questions & contact
Prior to contacting us at info@collegium.ethz.ch, please make sure to have read all available materials carefully, including the FAQs. The clearer your question or needs, the easier and faster we can assist you.

As we receive large numbers of applications, we ask for your understanding that we are limited in our ability to respond to questions. We will not be able to answer questions about exceptions from eligibility criteria. If you have strong reasons why exemptions from the eligibility criteria should be made, please justify these reasons in a supplementary document and upload it with your application.

Reference:
STIP: Early-Career Fellowships, Collegium Helveticum, Zurich. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 24, 2026 (accessed Nov 25, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/57201>.