

News from the Directorate (April 2020)

April 29, 2020 | Thomas Lichtensteiger

The Directorate meeting took place on 23 April 2020 by Zoom.

Return to workplace strategy

The Directorate thanks the COVID 19 Task Force for the great work and realizes how challenging it is to formulate a policy in a rapidly-changing and uncertain environment.

The Directorate approved the draft “return to workplace strategy” and to enter stage 3 starting Monday, May 4. During this stage a maximum of 30% of personnel (for Eawag overall and per Department) is allowed on campus at any given time (with additional limitations on number of personnel in a single lab or office). All other rules and regulations as described in the document should be followed.

DF ad hoc proposals to offset impacts of COVID 19 (Directive 20-09)

The coronavirus crisis has had and will continue to have significant impacts on Eawag’s research and productivity. Since most of Eawag’s research projects are funded by external agencies, project leaders are responsible for contacting the relevant funding agency and negotiating revisions of project deadlines and deliverables and/or supplemental funding. In cases where a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached with the external funding agency and shortfalls cannot be covered within the project leader’s department, a proposal can be submitted to the Directorate.

In cases of internally-funded projects, Eawag itself acts as the funding agency. No-cost extensions of 6 months will be granted for all internally-funded projects upon request to the Finance Office (no additional approval is required from the Directorate). If additional funding is needed to offset the impacts of COVID 19, the Eawag Directorate will consider requests for such funding on a case-by-case basis.

If the affected projects (whether funded externally or internally) employ postdocs or non-tenure track scientists whose salary would need to be offset, project leaders should consider whether individuals could apply for an Ad-hoc Discretionary Fund (Directive 20-09) under the provision “Offsetting Impact of COVID 19”.

Academic Transition Grant (ad hoc) - special cases related to COVID 19 impacts (Directive 20-10)

Since it is intended that an ATG will support a transition to the applicant’s next academic position, it is expected that the applicant will already have secured his or her next academic position when applying for an ATG.

The disruption due to COVID 19 is likely to be particularly problematic for researchers in the early stage of their careers. In order to help offset these impacts, it is not required that ATG funding support only the development of new skills, collaborations, and/or research directions. In such cases, the applicant should provide a brief comment of the impact of COVID 19 on their career and explain how the requested funding would ameliorate these impacts.

Eawag “Infotag” at EPFL

The directorate decided to cancel the Infotag for 2020 and have the next Infotag in 2021 (same month, same place – EPFL, same topic with potential addition of the joined Eawag-EPFL COVID 19 project).

<https://www.eawag.ch/en/info/portal/news/news-archive/archive-detail/news-from-the-directorate-april-2020-1>