



CHECKLIST FOR INVITING PARTICIPANTS TO MEETINGS IN SWITZERLAND AT THE INVITATION OF AN NGO

STEPS	WHAT	WHEN
1. Identify the participant		As early as possible
2. Check if a visa is needed to enter Switzerland	Please verify here: https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/publiservice/weisungen-kreisschreiben/visa/liste1_staatsangehoerigkeit.html If the participant is already a holder of a valid Schengen visa, verify that it still covers the foreseen trip. Schengen allows a maximum stay of 90 days within a 180-day period. See calculator: https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/info-einreise/voraussetzungen-nach-staat/mit-visum/aufenthaltsrechner.html	
3. If yes, identify the responsible Swiss Embassy according to the place of residence	The visa request must be lodged at the Swiss Embassy/consulate responsible for the applicant's place of residence, and in most cases will be handled by an outsourcing centre. Moreover, Switzerland has agreements with certain Schengen states that allow them to issue visas on its behalf where Switzerland is not represented. If another State issues visas on behalf of Switzerland, the process and the documents required may differ. We advise the inviting NGO to check with the responsible Embassy abroad if such agreements apply to their case. You can find the nearest Swiss embassy or consulate responsible for the applicant's place of residence by consulting the following link: https://www.swiss-visa.ch/ivis2/#/i210-select-country	
4. Ensure that the participant has received an invitation letter from your organization with the requested personal details	The letter must state : - Last name, first name (exactly the same as in passport), DOB, nationality, passport number and type; - Length of the stay - In which capacity the person will participate in the event (speaker, panellist, participant) ; - Covering of costs (travel, hotel, insurance, per diem, visa fees).	
5. Contact the Swiss Embassy/ consulate responsible for handling the application	a) Book an appointment at least 2 months before departure; b) Enquire which additional documents (other than those listed under point 7) are needed to apply for a visa for Switzerland as requirements differ depending on the country of residence. The processing time for visa applications varies and depends on local circumstances. Participants requiring an entry visa are advised to book their appointment starting 6 months before departure, but latest 2 months before departure. All applicants need an appointment in order to submit their visa application. Please bear in mind when arranging your appointment that the visa procedure takes at least 15 days once a complete application file with all required documents has been submitted. An incomplete application file might lead to a visa refusal or might lengthen the processing. Please note that Switzerland applies the European Schengen regulations concerning the issuing of visas. It is necessary for visa applicants to present themselves in person to submit and register their biometric data. This biometric data remains valid in the system for a period of 5 years.	Starting 6 months before departure, but latest 2 months before departure

<u>Documents</u> <u>checklist</u>	Please refer to the list mentioned on the Swiss Embassy's website or email. In general, the following documents are requested: • An application form for short stays (Schengen visa) duly filled out and signed by the applicant:: https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html) • A valid travel document (must be valid for at least 3 months after the return date and issued within the last 10 years) and a copy of it • Valid residency permit or equivalent document (e.g. exit/return visa) that allows the applicant to travel back to their residence country • Two recent passport-sized photographs • A letter of invitation from the inviting organization in Switzerland (please refer to point 4 above) • Proof of health insurance valid for the Schengen states and covering a minimum amount of EUR 30,000 (for holders of ordinary passport only) • A hotel reservation • A flight reservation/booking (including return flight) • <i>*Additional documents may be required by the Swiss embassy/consulate</i>	
6. Once the visa is delivered	Check the duration of the visa with your flight itinerary and make sure that you travel with all necessary supporting documents (invitation letter, residency permit, etc).	After getting the visa

List of countries in the Schengen area: https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-countries_en

More general information about visas can be found by consulting the State Secretariat for Migration website:
<https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise.html>