



**CHECKLIST FOR INVITING PARTICIPANTS TO MEETINGS IN SWITZERLAND AT THE INVITATION OF A NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (NGO)**

STEPS	HOW	WHEN
1. Identify the participant		As early as possible
2. Check if a visa is needed to enter Switzerland	Please verify here: Overview of ID and visa provisions according to nationality (Annex CH-1, List 1)	
3. If yes, identify the responsible Embassy according to the country of residence	Normally, the visa request must be lodged at the Swiss Embassy/Consulate responsible for the applicant's place of residence, and in some cases will be handled by an outsourcing center. 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 Swiss Embassy if such agreements apply to their case. You can find here the nearest Swiss embassy or consulate responsible for the applicant's place of residence.	
4. Visa validity and maximum length of stay	If the participant is already 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 short-stay calculator .	
5. Ensure that the participant has received an invitation letter from your NGO with the correct personal details on it.	Please refer to the template . The letter must state: - Last name, first name (exactly the same as in passport); - Length of the stay; - The NGO's mission in relation to the planned visit of the applicant and the link between the NGO and Switzerland; - Why and how the applicant has been selected and in which capacity they will participate in the event (participant, speaker); - Covering of costs (travel, hotel, insurance, <i>per diem</i>)	
6. Contact the Swiss Embassy/ Consulate responsible for handling the visa application	The processing time for visa applications varies and depends on local circumstances. All applicants need an appointment in order to submit their visa application. Please bear in mind when arranging your appointment that it must be made minimum 20 days before the planned departure date to allow for processing, as the visa procedure takes at least 15 days once a complete application file with all required documents has been submitted. It is necessary for visa applicants to present themselves in person at the counter to submit and register their biometric data. This biometric data remains valid in the VIS system for a period of 5 years.	2 months before departure

7. DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST	• An application form for short stays duly filled out and signed by the applicant; • 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 NGO in Switzerland (please refer to point 5 above and to the template in the annex); • Proof of financial resources of the applicant: recent pay slip and a recent certified bank statement; • Proof of health and repatriation insurance valid for the Schengen states and covering a minimum amount of EUR 30,000, not excluding COVID-related expenses; • A hotel reservation; • A flight reservation/booking including return flight; • For employees: confirmation of employer stating the function, the basic monthly salary, duration of employment and confirming that the applicant will return to their job after completion of their stay in Switzerland; • For self-employed persons: confirmation of their registration documents; • Additional documents may be required by the Swiss embassy/consulate.	
8. Focal point for participants	The visa application process must be monitored by the inviting NGO's focal point in Geneva or in the field in order to ensure that all requirements are fulfilled and that the participants are present for the appointment at the Embassy/consulate. The applicants must be able to explain the purpose of their stay during their appointment at the Swiss Embassy.	
9. Type of visa delivered	Check if the dates of validity are the ones requested. Usually, the Swiss Embassy issues a Schengen visa, but sometimes, they have to issue a Limited Territoriality Visa (LTV). In this case: - Do not book a flight with a stopover in a country of the Schengen area; - In case of stopovers outside the Schengen area, ensure that the participant has no restriction to travel to that country.	When the visa is issued
10. Documents for the trip	- Valid travel document (must be valid for at least 3 months after the return date); - Visas to exit the country of residence, for entry into Switzerland and, if applicable, re-entry into the country of residence; - The official personalized letter of invitation and a copy of all the documents submitted to the embassy.	When the visa is issued

More general information about visas can be found by consulting the website of the [State Secretariat for Migration](#) (SEM).