

SwissCollNet - Call for proposals 2022

Example of a full project proposal

This example of a project proposal contains: the application form completed, a project description and a budget.

*** Application form completed

SECTION 1 - applicant information

Applicant status	Main applicant
Last name	XXX
First name	YYY
Email address	QQQ@RRR.SSS
Phone	0041 12 345 67 89
Website	www.TTT.ch
Title	Dr
Position	Curator
Institution	Museum ZZZ
Postal address	Street WWW

Upload - CV

No example provided

SECTION 2 - project description

2.1 General information

Title
Complete digitization of the important <i>Maller</i> egg collection.

Start date
December 1 st 2022

End date
March 31 st 2024
Duration
16 months
Project summary/abstract
<p>The main objective of this project is the complete digitization of a large egg collections that has been recently given to the Natural History Museum of Geneva by the family of Berner Maller, a Swiss amateur ornithologist (1914-1981), which comprises approximately 10'000 set of eggs (i.e. clutches). This collection will double the number of eggs present in the Museum's collection. The project includes first the reconditioning of the collection, which is currently stored in large cardboard boxes. We then envisage to collaborate with an expert on egg identification who will cover the task of verifying the identification indicated on the labels and provide names when lacking; a first evaluation of the collection showed that approximately 10% of the specimens do not have an identification at the species level. The reconditioned and labelled specimens will be then entered in the Ornithological database of the Natural History Museum of Geneva (software FileMaker Pro). This database already follows the standards required by GBIF.ch. Because a large part of this collection originated from Switzerland, we expect that making the data related to this collection available would be a great asset for the study of historical populations of birds, in particular for species associated with low land habitats that have significantly been modified by the agricultural practices during the 20th century.</p>
Key words
Birds, eggs, Swiss biodiversity, historical specimens, endangered species, Maller
Disciplines
Zoology-Vertebrates
Disciplines - comments
egg collection
Fields
Collection - (re)determination Collection - conditioning Digitisation - databasing
Fields - comments
-

2.2 Project description

Upload - project description

An example of a project description with figures is provided below.

Comments
-

SECTION 3 - budget

3.1. Detailed budget

Upload - detailed budget

An example of a detailed budget is provided below.

3.2 Summary by cost category (CHF)

Amounts retrieved from the SUMMARY page of the budget file (see example budget).

Total personnel costs	169 686
Total equipment costs	0
Total consumables costs	0
Total sub-contracts costs	0
Total various costs	0
Total personnel matching funds	164'242
Total equipment matching funds	5'762
Total consumables matching funds	4 000
Total cash (own budget/third-party) matching funds	0
Total various matching funds	4 000
Total funds requested from SwissCollNet	169 686
Total matching funds provided	178'004
TOTAL BUDGET	347'690

3.3 Summary by applicant (CHF)

Amounts retrieved from the SUMMARY page of the budget file; to be filled in by all applicants (if there are several)

Applicant status	Main applicant
Total funds requested from SwissCollNet	169 686
Total matching funds provided	178'004

Upload - commitment letter

No example provided (an easy-to-follow template is provided on swisscollnet.scnat.ch/application)

Submission of collection survey

The collection surveys related to this project have been submitted?
 yes

3.4 Budget proportion by field

Field	%
Collection management, conditioning	40
Digitisation and databasing	60
Training	0
Other	0

Comments

-

SECTION 4 - Contacts

Suggested reviewers
Provide by order of priority the contacts of the 2 persons outside Switzerland that may act as external experts. These persons should not have a conflict of interest with the project and might be contacted beforehand. Note that only one of the 2 suggested reviewers will give an evaluation during the review process.
XXX, YYY, Museum ZZZ, xxx.yyy@zzz.xy
XXX, YYY, Museum ZZZ, xxx.yyy@zzz.xy
Conflicts of interest
In case of conflicts of interest, mention here the international expert(s) not competent to review your proposal (justify why) / optional
XXX, YYY, because

***** Project description**

Project title
Complete digitization of the important <i>Maller</i> egg collection.

Main applicant information
XXX, YYY
Museum ZZZ

Project description

Background

The museum's collections are traditionally used for research in systematics and phylogeny (i.e. the definition of species and their relationships) and biogeography (the study of their distribution in space). They are also indispensable for long-term studies in ecology, particularly with regard to zoological specimens. Eggs in collections provide essential evidence of the actual reproduction of the species at a given time and place. Data extracted from egg collections are used to establish long-term changes in the breeding area, particularly regarding the 19th and the 20th centuries, as most eggs were collected before the major changes in agricultural practices in Europe (Marini *et al.* 2020; see **Figure 1**). In most cases, reductions in the breeding area can be shown by comparing historical data, extracted from collections, with current observations. Clutch size (i.e. the number of eggs in the clutch) can be used to study changes in lifestyle over time, for example to see if the decline of a species is related to reduced fertility or increased mortality of individuals. The detection of pesticides or other toxic products in eggshells has made it possible to highlight the correlation between the decline of raptors in Europe and the use of DDT. In the longer term, studies are being carried out on egg thickness to test changes in the fecundity of species in the wild. The Natural History Museum of Geneva holds already a significant egg collection, and the addition of 10'000 new sets into this collection would increase its taxonomical, geographical and historical coverage. Most bird species are now protected, including their eggs, some are threatened with extinction, or have unfortunately already disappeared. The heritage value of large historical collections is therefore extremely important for the scientific community as a whole.

Scope and relevance

If collections are essential to the work of scientists, this implies firstly that the collection is accessible, i.e. deposited in an institution open to researchers from all over the world, both for direct examination of the specimens but also for the availability of information associated with the collections (typically the date and origin of the items). Secondly, the collection must be placed in physical conditions that allow for long-term preservation: limited temperature and humidity variations, protection from light and insect pests, and storage furniture that allows for safe and durable handling. Accessibility and conservation are part of the specifications of a public institution such as the Natural History Museum of Geneva and are within the scope of SwissCollNet. Our ornithological collections, in 2022, included approximately 46,000 items, of which 9,285 were eggs (i.e. 26% of the collection), giving a total of 30,600 eggs. The entire collection is kept in suitable premises and furniture. Our department has the space capacity to integrate a new collection such as that of Berner Maller but we are currently lacking the personnel capacity to treat this whole collection in a reasonable time. At present, the Maller collection is neither accessible to researchers nor is it in a sustainable state of preservation in non-acid-free large boxes. The reconditioning and integration of the Maller collection into a database would guarantee a reasonable use of this collection by scientists, the maintenance of its physical integrity and the long-term conservation of a heritage on Swiss territory. Once the VSNHC is available, the data associated with the Maller collection will be integrated, along with the already digitized Ornithological collection.

Detailed project plan

Part 1. Reconditioning

The step includes removing the eggs from their current boxes and placing them into adapted conditioning. Dust removal might be necessary for some of the sets. We estimated that one person can clean and replace the eggs in containers at the rhythm of approximately 10 sets of eggs per hour.

Time scheduled: 1 person full time (hired for the project), approximately 6 months (128 days).

Deliverable/outcome: 10'000 cleaned clutches stored in boxes appropriate for long-term storage.

Part 2. Re-identification

Will be conducted after the reconditioning. New labels will be added when necessary.

Time scheduled: 1 person 40% (2 days per week), approximately 2 months.

Deliverable/outcome: a taxonomic check for most of the collection and the identification of the unlabelled specimens.

Part 3. Digitization and integration into the Natural History Museum of Geneva database

The digitization will start after the reconditioning. The operators will work at the beginning in close collaboration with the egg expert in order to work on groups that have been already identified. The integration into the database, using the software FileMaker Pro, will follow the standards already set in place at the Museum, including the georeferencing of the localities. For each set a new label will be printed and placed within the box, and a picture of the complete set will be taken. We estimate that about 5-6 clutches can be fully digitized per hour.

Time scheduled: 2 people at 50%, approximately 10 months (one person is a collaborator of the Museum)

Deliverable/outcome: 10'000 sets of eggs digitized, ready to be integrated into the SVNHC.

Methods and equipment

Part 1. Reconditioning: 10'000 small acid-free cardboard boxes, cotton for cleaning.

Part 2. Re-identification: caliper and identification references (books and websites)

Part 3. Digitization and integration: paper for labelling, 2 personal working places (computers), 2 photographic stations

Human resources and collaboration

The identification part will be conducted by an independent ornithologist who has a large knowledge on eggs collection, having already worked at the museums of Bern and Lausanne.

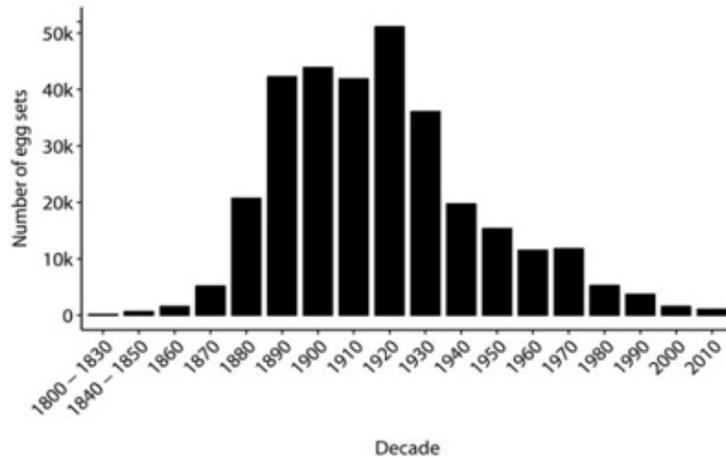
The persons hired for the reconditioning and digitization will probably be students that have already worked in the collections as volunteers. The curator of the ornithology department will supervise and organise the work.

Impact

This project provides a significant contribution to the collections of the Natural History Museum of Geneva. It does not include a collaboration with other Swiss institutions but the digitization of the collection will participate to the global availability of the natural history collections held in Switzerland.

Figures and/or tables

Figure 1: Distribution of >300'000 egg sets of birds collected by decade between 1800 and 2017, extracted from a selection of major egg collection (including the Natural History Museum of Geneva). Modified from Marini et al. (2020).



References

Marini, M. Â., Hall, L., Bates, J., Steinheimer, F. D., McGowan, R., Silveira, L. F., Lijtmaer, D. A., Tubaro, P. L., Córdoba-Córdoba, S., Gamauf, A., Greeney, H. F., Schweizer, M., Kamminga, P., Cibois, A., Vallotton, L., Russell, D., Robinson, S. K., Sweet, P. R., Frahnert, S., Corado, R. and Heming, N. M. 2020. The five million bird eggs in the world's museum collections are an invaluable and underused resource. *The Auk*: 137 (4), ukaa036, <https://doi.org/10.1093/auk/ukaa036>

BUDGET SUMMARY

All fields in this page are automatically filled in from data entered in the other sheets; please do not overwrite.

PROJECT

project title

MAIN APPLICANT

first, last name

institution

SUMMARY BY COST CATEGORY

These amounts are to be reported during the online application.

TOTAL BUDGET OF THE PROJECT

347'690 chf

TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS	169'686	chf
TOTAL EQUIPMENT COSTS	0	chf
TOTAL CONSUMABLE COSTS	0	chf
TOTAL SUB-CONTRACT COSTS	0	chf
TOTAL VARIOUS COSTS	0	chf
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED FROM SWISSCOLLNET	169'686	chf

TOTAL PERSONNEL MATCHING FUNDS	164'242	chf
TOTAL EQUIPMENT MATCHING FUNDS	5'762	chf
TOTAL CONSUMABLE MATCHING FUNDS	4'000	chf
TOTAL CASH (OWN BUDGET/THIRD PARTY) MATCHING FUNDS	4'000	chf
TOTAL VARIOUS MATCHING FUNDS	0	chf
TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS PROVIDED	178'004	chf

SUMMARY BY APPLICANT

These amounts are to be reported during the online application.

	MAIN APP.	CO-APP. 1	CO-APP. 2	CO-APP. 3	CO-APP. 4	CO-APP. 5	CO-APP. 6	CO-APP. 7	CO-APP. 8
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED FROM SWISSCOLLNET	169'686	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS PROVIDED	178'004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

