



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

# FDFA Guidelines on Partnering with Sponsors 2021



# 1 Introduction



The Federal Council adopts the Swiss 'Strategy for Communication Abroad' every four years. The Strategy determines the points of emphasis, and the objectives, of how Switzerland wishes to be perceived internationally. It also has a legal basis in the Federal Act of 24 March 2000 on the Cultivation of Switzerland's Image Abroad. The Act continues to provide a sound foundation for the work of Presence Switzerland – the FDFA unit that implements the Strategy for Communication Abroad as defined.

Successfully cultivating Switzerland's image abroad requires reliable information about the widely differing knowledge and perceptions of our country among people from the many corners and cultures of the world.

However varied these attitudes and impressions, they have one thing in common – they are closely associated with the products and services we offer, be they Swiss army knives, drone technology, cheese, precision engineering, tourism, banking services, the arts or world-beating research.

Swiss businesses, Swiss artists, Swiss tourist services, and the like therefore have a very direct influence over Switzerland's image as a nation. The sum total of all of these impressions is the picture that Switzerland presents to the wider world.

The federal government's partnerships with these largely private sector actors are therefore crucial in cultivating Switzerland's image around the globe. That is why these partners may, and should, continue to be involved in events and projects organised and hosted by the FDFA or by Switzerland's representations abroad.

It is also clear, however, that each collaboration brings with it not just opportunities, but also risks, in this case for Switzerland's reputation worldwide. That is why it is so important to have clear rules about how these partnerships may be entered into, and the form they may take. Sponsor partnerships work only if the desired effect is generated in both the country in which the event is held, and Switzerland.

The guidelines that are condensed into this document offer just such a set of rules. They are intended as a supportive and binding framework for the work of representations abroad and all FDFA staff entering into partnerships with sponsors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cassis', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ignazio Cassis,  
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

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# 2 Principles

Partnering with sponsors, and thus primarily with the private sector, is important for effective communication abroad. It allows Switzerland to promote its image and to further safeguard its interests abroad. The FDFA's focus here is on image transfer between the official side of Switzerland and the Swiss companies concerned.

The FDFA presents itself as a role model where sponsorship is concerned, ensures positive image transfer both in Switzerland and abroad, fulfils its due diligence obligations in their entirety, and communicates credibly and transparently with the general public.

Public perceptions of individual economic sectors both in Switzerland and abroad are in a constant state of flux, and can turn rapidly. The FDFA therefore decides on potential sponsor partnerships on a case-by-case basis.

A partnership is not entered into if an analysis indicates that the desired image transfer cannot be achieved, or is at risk.

## 2.1 Responsibilities

Heads of mission, and heads of division at head office, are responsible for their own sponsorship activities. They must respect the Guidelines and draw up a sponsorship concept on a case-by-case basis. This concept must also include risk management.

The sponsorship concept sets out the opportunities and risks attached to sponsorship, and defines the necessary procedures.

Each head of mission, or head of division at head office, is responsible for training their staff on risk management as it relates to sponsorship.

## 2.2 Commitment to transparency

The FDFA gives all sponsor partnerships a title consisting of the names of the sponsors and information on the event, and provides this information to the public in suitable form (see examples in Annex 4).

### **NEW 'SPONSORSHIP COMPETENCE CENTRE' AT PRESENCE SWITZERLAND (PRS)**

The Sponsorship Competence Centre (PRS) is on hand to answer questions and to provide risk management support to the representations and to head office. When assessing legal risks and compliance issues, PRS works closely with the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement (CCP) (see Section 7.3).

# 3 Opportunities and risks – an overview

## Opportunities and potential for Switzerland's communication abroad

### → Image transfer

Switzerland's image benefits from the vibrancy of the Swiss economy and its products. In return, a positive image of Switzerland represents a key success factor and added value for the export industry, while influencing factors such as foreign policy scope, appeal as a business location, exchange among the business and scientific communities and tourism. Cooperation with the private sector is of enormous importance to Switzerland's communication abroad, and offers an opportunity to further safeguard the nation's interests.

### → Knowledge transfer

Private companies often have specific skills in construction and technology, or other specialist areas, that may support a Swiss presence in certain settings. These include, for example, providing an expert to speak at an event, as well as innovative products.

### → Networking

A steadily growing and well-maintained network of project partners enables the FDFA to manage its own interests pro-actively and to deal promptly with any conflict. It also gives it options for partnering on future projects.

### → Visibility

For the FDFA, working with competent corporate partners opens up greater potential for its communications. Strengthening communication means that targets and target groups of Switzerland's communication abroad can be reached more easily. This lends appearances featuring Switzerland in its official capacity greater visibility and appeal. Finally, sponsor partnerships generate additional funding, which further boosts the impact of communication projects abroad.

### → Lower net cost for the federal government

Sponsor funding reduces the net cost to the federal government of Switzerland's presence at major international events.

### → Media potential

Major international events are huge PR platforms. They give the federal government and Swiss business the opportunity to communicate with an international audience for a prolonged period, and to put its core messages across to maximum media effect.

## Risks and challenges for Switzerland's communication abroad

### → Reputation

Media coverage can soon turn into an unstoppable tide of negativity, which can have a detrimental effect on public perceptions of the party concerned, produce a groundswell of pressure, and cause lasting reputational damage. The FDFA and the representations abroad must have a well-developed sense and knowledge of these dynamics, so that they are able to identify any risks at an early stage.

### → Conflicts of interest

A sponsor partnership must be a win-win situation. When acquiring sponsors, consideration must always be given to the interests and expectations of the companies concerned. This enables potential conflicts of interest to be identified and avoided at an early stage. If involving private partners results in too great a change to the nature of the project, there is the danger that Switzerland's interests will be pushed into the background, or that a partner's objectives will run counter to those of the federal government. Consequently, the essence of each project – its principal objectives, core messages and tone – must remain untouched. Instead, there must be a good balance between the interests of the private actor and those of the federal government.

### → Dependencies and distortions of competition

Medium and long-term collaboration can create mutual dependencies. A public administration must remain independent, however, for the specific reason that it must not distort competition between its potential sponsorship partners. Under Art. 2 of the Federal Act on Public Procurement (PPA; SR 172.056.1), the federal government must ensure that all bidders are treated equally when awarding public supply, service and works contracts. Particular attention must therefore be paid to ensuring that the procurement procedure is transparent and properly executed.

### → Stop & go

Any cooperative venture with the private sector entails the risk that available resources will contract during an economic downturn. It can also not be ruled out that existing sponsors become insolvent, and that funds that have already been earmarked are suddenly unavailable.

### → **Foreign companies**

Particular vigilance is required with foreign companies, especially as they may be competitors to Swiss firms. This is true above all in sectors whose products and services are closely associated with Switzerland's image. It is therefore essential to analyse the Swiss market to establish the situation. If a foreign company is not in direct competition with Swiss companies in the same sector, there will generally be no obstacle to collaboration, providing the company's goals and values are congruent with those of the federal government, and the desired image transfer is assured.

### → **Cross-subsidisation**

In the case of organisations funded substantially by the federal government, there must be a detailed review of whether or not sponsorship is the appropriate form of cooperation. In many cases, an alternative form might be the right one to involve such organisations in an event, such as practical support rather than a financial contribution.

## **Conclusion**

The federal government's obligation to conduct due diligence has a central role to play where sponsorship is concerned. Here, there must be a sufficient number of staff with the requisite capabilities.

From 2021 onwards, representations and head office divisions can contact the new 'Sponsorship Competence Centre' (PRS) in Bern with questions on all of the aspects discussed above, as well as if they are unsure about anything when selecting sponsors (see contact details in Section 7.3).

We also recommend using the checklist in Section 8.3 for case-by-case analyses of potential sponsor partnerships.



# 4 Forms of cooperation

There are basically two types of sponsorship for private partners: passive sponsorship, i.e. the FDFA is the sponsored party, and active sponsorship, i.e. the FDFA is the sponsor.

The lion's share of all of the representations' sponsorship activities in recent years have fallen under passive sponsorship.

## 4.1 Definitions

### 4.1.1 Sponsor partnership

- Two (or more) partners: the sponsor and the sponsored party
- Services provided and services received are clearly defined
- In many cases, money and/or benefits in kind are exchanged for visibility/hospitality/image transfer
- Sponsorship is geared to the optimum achievement of the parties' individual aims, i.e. a win-win situation
- The objective is benefit and satisfaction for the parties' common target groups (consumers/sponsor's customers and the sponsored party's stakeholder groups, relevant media outlets, influencers and multipliers)

### Active sponsorship, the FDFA as sponsor

- Reasons include greater project impact (communications, visibility, additional funding for Switzerland's communication abroad), networking
- Sponsorship as a means of harnessing communication abroad for reciprocal image transfer
- On offer are involvement in Switzerland's official communication activities, thus benefiting the sponsor by association from the country's success, good name and image

Active sponsorship means that the FDFA takes on the role of sponsor, providing financial support to third parties as a means of cultivating Switzerland's image abroad.

### 4.1.2 Types of sponsorship

#### Passive sponsorship, the FDFA as the sponsored party

- Reasons include greater project impact (communications, visibility, additional funding for Switzerland's communication abroad), networking
- Sponsorship as a means of harnessing communication abroad for reciprocal image transfer
- On offer are involvement in Switzerland's official communication activities, thus benefiting the sponsor by association from the country's success, good name and image

Passive sponsorship means that the FDFA receives benefits from a sponsor. There are some aspects that are similar to a contractual relationship, such as the sponsored party also acting in the interests of the sponsor, which may lead to a conflict of interests. In addition, commercial services are subject to competition on the free market, so they cannot be offered by the federal government without statutory authorisation.

### 4.1.3 Public-private partnership

A public-private partnership consists of long-term cooperation between the public and private sectors. Under a public-private partnership, the federal government and private sector entities share the costs, risks and responsibility of a specific project. As a rule, public-private projects will not be entered into by representations, or used for major events. Within the FDFA, long-term arrangements with the private sector are entered into primarily by the SDC in the context of its development projects. This is referred to as private sector engagement (PSE). Such projects fall outside of the scope of these Guidelines. Instead, they are governed by the relevant SDC policies.

## 4.2 Legal foundations

The FDFA has had an expert opinion on the legal framework for sponsorship activities produced by Dr Felix Uhlmann. It forms the basis of the present Guidelines. This legal opinion, produced in 2012, states that the Federal Act on the Cultivation of Switzerland's Image Abroad, and the corresponding Ordinance on the Cultivation of Switzerland's Image Abroad, provide the foundation for passive and active sponsorship on the part of the FDFA. The FDFA thus has a sound legal basis for its sponsorship activities:

- Federal Act of 24 March 2000 on the Cultivation of Switzerland's Image Abroad (Art. 2) (SR 194.1)
- Ordinance on the Cultivation of Switzerland's Image Abroad (Art. 6) (SR 194.11)

Both forms of cooperation must also observe the following legal bases and instruments:

- Federal Act of 21 June 2019 on Public Procurement (PPA; SR 172.056.1; revised version enters into force on 1 January 2021)
- Ordinance of 12 February 2020 on Public Procurement (PPO; SR 172.056.11; revised version enters into force on 1 January 2021)
- Federal Act of 5 October 1990 on Financial Assistance and Subsidies (SubA; SR 616.1)

- Federal Act of 7 October 2005 on the Federal Financial Budget (FBA; SR 611.0)
- Federal Ordinance of 5 April 2006 on the Federal Financial Budget of 5 April 2006 (FBO; SR 611.01)
- FDFA Directive 300-0 on the Accounting of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- FDFA Directive 301-0 on Financial Authority
- FDFA Directive 330-0 on the Public Procurement of Services, Supplies of Goods and Construction Work
- FDFA Directive 331-0 on Contracts and Certain Treaties
- Federal Department of Finance Directives of 1 April 2003 on Conducting Major Third-Party Events with Federal Support, and Special Federal Events
- Third party events in the residences of representations abroad / Basic principles ([Services – Finance – Instructions, leaflets, tools and forms – Safeguarding Swiss interests](#) (versions in [DE](#), [FR](#), [IT](#) and [EN](#)))
- FDFA Directive 200-4-061 on Benefits for Staff Posted Abroad (Art. 20)
- FAQs on sponsorship contracts (see [Services – Law & contracts – Standard contracts – Sponsoring – FAQs Sponsorship Contracts](#) (versions in [EN](#), [DE](#), [FR](#) and, [IT](#)))

# 5 Passive sponsorship: the FDFA as the sponsored party

The FDFA organises an event or a project. Private or institutional partners contribute, either financially or in kind (e.g. by supplying practical resources). In return, the partner is included in communication activities, for example with a presence at the event, or by means of logo placement.

In the case of activities of Swiss representations abroad that can be classified as marking Switzerland's presence, public diplomacy or promotional activities for Switzerland, a distinction must be made between:

**activities of a strictly official nature** (e.g. media events or receptions for Swiss or foreign government ministers and high-level representatives) and **activities that are not official in nature**. Although these are an integral part of communicating Switzerland's image abroad, they appeal to

other target groups and sections of society, including the Swiss community in the host country, and are not founded solely on official interests.

The nature of these activities must be determined according to the customs of the host country, and the situation assessed by the local representation on a case-by-case basis.

Expenses for activities of a strictly official nature should essentially be covered by the FDFA's global budget, in particular by commitments from head office to cover the costs, or by the representation's own funding facility for entertainment activities. Funding may be provided by means of passive sponsorship only where supported by compelling reasons, and subject to the prior consent of the Sponsorship Competence Centre.

## 5.1 Balance and visibility

In principle, the participation of a private sector partner in any project may not change the fundamental identity of that project – its core message, tone, and corporate identity. Rather, the private partner's involvement may serve to increase the impact

and scale of the project, or to reduce the federal government's net expenditure in connection with a major event. Care must therefore be taken that no sponsor is given too much visibility, to avoid overshadowing the essential Swissness of the event.

## 5.2 Process

### 5.2.1 Analysis, budget and concept

#### Analysis, budget and concept for FDFA projects

An initial analysis should set out the core framework for the project. Consideration must be given to the type of project, and its objectives. Possible locations and time frames should also be fixed approximately.

These preliminary considerations help in deciding whether or not a given project makes sense in terms of Switzerland's communication abroad.

A clear financing plan must be drawn up to avoid dependence on private partners, who should not be in a position to either make or break the project. To secure the right balance and/or the desired identity for the project (principal objectives, core message, degree of Swissness, tone and corporate identity), plans should provide for a base of financial support that is as broad as possible, involving a number of private sector partners, rather than excessively large contributions from just a few individual sponsors.

A detailed project concept is produced once it has been determined that the project displays the necessary strategic relevance to the aims of Switzerland's communication abroad,

private partner potential has been established in accordance with the sponsorship strategy, and a realistic financing plan has been drawn up.

### Analysis, budget and concept for the Swiss presence at major events

#### Use of a major event for Switzerland's communication abroad

Having been invited to participate in a World Expo, or once the venue for the Olympic Games has been chosen, Presence Switzerland will analyse the core framework for a Swiss presence, and in particular whether or not the platform is a good fit with the aims of Switzerland's communication abroad. Possible infrastructures, the timeline and the financial framework will also be outlined.

#### Budget

Presence Switzerland draws up the budget required to use the platform provided by a major event. In most cases, the FDFA will plan for the Confederation to finance the lion's share of the project so that its objectives and interests can be safeguarded. The share of financing provided by sponsorship will vary according to the country hosting the event, Switzerland's local economic interests, and the theme of the event or the Swiss Pavilion.

#### Political process

If a major event is a good fit with the aims of Switzerland's communication abroad, Presence Switzerland will submit the corresponding proposal to the Federal Council. Budgets of more than CHF 10 million are subject to the submission of an official credit message to the Swiss parliament requesting the funding facility in question. The proposal to the Federal Council, or the submission to Parliament, describes the project and presents a specific budget for an official Swiss presence. In a separate section, the proposal or submission also provides clear details of the sectors which might be particularly interested in reciprocal image transfer, given the background or thematic focus of the event or Switzerland's presence, or which might be important in achieving the aims of Switzerland's communication abroad. The proposal or submission must contain the objective of sponsorship in the host country concerned, i.e. the share of third-party funding in the form of sponsor partnerships. This is derived from the information described above. The proposal or request for a funding facility must state these Guidelines as the requirements to be fulfilled when seeking sponsors.

#### Project concept

A detailed project concept for Switzerland's official presence is drawn up as soon as the Federal Council or Parliament has approved funding for participation in the major event in question.

## 5.2.2 Communication

### Communication to institutional partners, the private sector and associations

Institutional partners, the private sector and associations are notified of the principal elements of the project concept by email, letter or on the internet as early possible to guarantee that all potential partners are treated equally. This means that they can be made aware of a given project at an early stage, and important preliminary work in acquiring potential sponsors can be done.

We recommend using all channels of communication (email, letter and the internet) open to the FDFA so that all prospects have the same level of information.

## 5.2.3 Design

### Defining sponsorship options

Once the project concept has been drawn up, consideration must be given to the sponsorship options that the project offers. It is important to specify, for example, how and where sponsors may have a presence, or how they might help to shape the project.

The second step is to define the partner hierarchy, and the services that are to be provided by each party, in greater detail.

It makes sense to draft a sponsorship concept like this for larger-scale events such as the Soirée Suisse format, Swiss Innovation Weeks, embassy opening ceremonies and country programmes.

The sponsorship concept is the basis for approaching potential partners and negotiating with them down the line.

The **sponsorship concept** is an **internal document** that contains the following elements:

1. Status analysis
2. Context analysis with regard to institutional partnerships
3. Risk analysis and due diligence with regard to potential sponsor partnerships
4. Project/event: brief description of the project/event for which sponsorship is planned
5. Project objectives (derived from Switzerland's Strategy for Communication Abroad)
6. Budget: what budget will be used to implement the project/event?
7. Time frame: what is the timetable for implementing the project/event?
8. Sponsorship objectives: how much of the overall budget should be covered by sponsorship?
9. Sponsorship structure: what is the sponsor hierarchy and what are the corresponding sponsorship contributions?
10. Sponsorship services: what services do the sponsors receive?

11. Sponsorship strategy: which sponsors will be approached?  
How will they be approached?
12. Sponsorship packages: design and value
13. Evaluation: how will sponsorship success be measured?

The sponsorship concept is summarised in easily accessible form in a sponsorship brochure for potential partners.

The **sponsorship brochure** is thus a **public document** that generally contains the following elements:

1. Brief project description with key facts and figures (goals, overall budget, time frame, expected results, etc.)
2. Sponsorship structure: categories/hierarchy with corresponding titles, e.g. Official Partner, Main Partner, Event Partner, Supplier, etc.
3. Services provided by the FDFA (see examples below): detailed description of individual sponsorship packages (incl. rates) with the services provided by the FDFA in each case
4. Illustrations/examples
5. Contact person(s) for sponsorship-related questions

The services provided by the FDFA may include the following, depending on the project in question: partner status, networking, inclusion in communications, social media, independent presence, product placement, logo\*, event invitation, use of venue for own events, etc.

*\*Placement of the partner's logo on the project website, a sub-site\*\* and/or in the embassy newsletter, partner board at the event venue*

*\*\*Partner logos must always be placed on the relevant event page and not on the embassy's home page. Please make sure that the title of the event is more prominent than the partner logos.*

When placing partner logos, you can always consult the three examples in Annex 4, which correspond to the above guidelines.

The golden rule here is that sponsor mentions must be **transparent** and have a clear association with the event. Only sponsors that have actually actively supported the event may be mentioned.

## 5.2.4 Sponsor acquisition

### Identifying potential sponsors (local or parent company)

Since companies generally fix their budgets for the following year in the autumn, it is advisable to start canvassing for sponsors early on. The Swiss 'Markenlandschaft' brand marketing website at [www.markenlandschaft.ch](http://www.markenlandschaft.ch) provides a useful overview of potential sponsors. The following criteria must be considered when identifying and selecting potential sponsors:

- ✓ What are the potential sponsor's values?
- ✓ What are its target markets?

- ✓ Is it a fit with the thematic focus of the Swiss presence?
- ✓ Does the image match?
- ✓ Are the target groups the same?
- ✓ Which partners contribute added value to our communication activities?
- ✓ Which partners fit well into the storyline for a specific event?
- ✓ Partner ethos (sense of genuine cooperation)?
- ✓ What type of sponsorship (cash or in-kind)?

### Opportunities and risks – analysis and due diligence

Given that the involved parties must also serve Switzerland's communication abroad, public sector entities should select their private sector partners carefully and according to clear criteria. In addition to the opportunities that may arise from working with a specific partner, it is essential that the FDFA identifies the possible risks. The principles for sponsor partnerships set out in Section 2 apply here.

The following aspects should be factored into the analysis of opportunities and risks, as well as the required due diligence process (see checklist in Annex).

#### ✓ 'Swissness' factor

Is the potential private partner a company with Swiss origins, or a Swiss brand?

#### ✓ Company's interests

Has enough been done to clarify the interests and expectations of the company concerned?

#### ✓ Are corporate social responsibility and sustainability part of the corporate culture?

Indicators of this kind of commitment include the application of CSR guidelines such as the [OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises](#), the [UN Global Compact](#) (including membership of the relevant national network), non-financial reporting, ISO certifications etc., as well as specific undertakings in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### ✓ Negative or controversial company practices

Have negative or controversial company practices been observed that might result in negative media coverage in the near future, or has the company already been the subject of negative headlines? Well-known examples are not complying with workplace health and safety regulations and working conditions for staff, particularly in developing and emerging countries; causing pollution from non-ecological production methods; human rights violations; corruption allegations, etc.

#### ✓ Recognition/image

Does the company already enjoy a minimum level of recognition and/or a positive image among foreign target groups, which could be transferred to Swiss public sector entities by means of passive sponsorship?

#### ✓ Target image

Does the company want to project the same image as Switzerland's communication abroad? The target image may differ slightly depending on the target country and the project.

- ✓ **Additional appeal**  
does the inclusion of the company make the project more attractive?
- ✓ **Risk of negative image transfer to Switzerland and/or the event venue**  
are there any past, recurring, current or foreseeable incidents that might impact negatively on the federal government as the sponsored party?
- ✓ **Sub-contractors**  
if the company uses sub-contractors, it is also important to check if there are any negative or controversial business practices associated with these contractors. If the company does use sub-contractors, there is also the danger of covert sponsorship.
- ✓ **Financial and operational resources**  
to ensure that the financial and operational resources for passive sponsorship are available, where necessary the Swiss public sector entity may request that the private partner provide proof of their financial and business standing.
- ✓ **Foreign companies**  
before contacting a foreign company, it is essential that the Swiss market be analysed first to determine whether or not there are any Swiss companies active in the sector concerned. If you have investigated this and the foreign company is not in direct competition with a Swiss company in the same sector, there will generally be no obstacle to collaboration. However, the company's goals and values must be congruent with those of the federal government, and the desired image transfer must be assured.

Major events: sponsor partnerships with companies that are able to contribute in cash and/or in kind to the achievement of the sponsorship goals, but that are associated with risks, must be referred to the head of the FDFA for approval before negotiations begin.<sup>1</sup>

### Tendering procedure

Passive sponsorship is not generally subject to the Federal Act or Ordinance on Public Procurement.

However, based on the constitutional principle of equal treatment and fair competition, the following principles of procurement should always be respected in practice. This applies to both cash and in-kind sponsorship. The principles are as follows:

- Competition between candidates
- Efficient use of available resources
- Equal treatment for candidates; it is therefore advisable to work via national trade associations wherever possible
- Transparency when selecting candidates

The internal sponsorship file should document compliance with these points.

### Making contact/selling the concept

Once risks have been analysed and suitable sponsors identified, the next stage is to make contact. One approach is to write to potential sponsors by email or letter. They might also be invited to an information event in Switzerland and/or the target country, or an in-person appointment might be made.

## 5.2.5 Negotiation and contract conclusion phase

### Negotiating the sponsor offer/services to be provided by the FDFA

If a sponsor is interested in collaborating, the sponsorship brochure provides the basis for negotiating and specifying what is on offer and what will be provided in return. The next step is then to set down the offer in full, as well as what the partner is expected to provide.

In addition to the partner's contribution – whether cash or in-kind – it is important when discussing the services provided by the FDFA that the rights that are granted to the partner are explained and greater detail provided, including the applicable terms of use. In particular, the contract must contain a provision stating that all of the partner's communications in relation to the event, any and all use of official images of the event or of images taken by the partner or by third parties during the event must be approved in advance by the FDFA.

### Concluding the contract

Standard templates for sponsorship contracts (versions in [EN](#), [DE](#), [FR](#), and [IT](#)) can be downloaded from the intranet (see [Services – Law and contracts – Standard contracts – Sponsoring](#)).

There are two templates for passive sponsorship. Either may be used for both cash and in-kind arrangements:

- A short template in letter form for simple contracts; and
- A comprehensive template for complex sponsorship arrangements, e.g. major events in cooperation with Presence Switzerland, where the sponsor's contribution is particularly integrated/important, or where the FDFA is providing substantial services in return.

If key provisions in the standard contracts need to be amended or another template is used, the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement must be consulted.

Any passive sponsorship worth more than **CHF 1,500** must have a written contract signed by the parties involved. For amounts below this threshold, the terms may also be agreed by other means, specifically an email exchange. What is important is that the key elements of the relationship are clearly documented. These are the form/scope of inclusion in communications, sponsorship amount, purpose of the event and dates/deadlines.

<sup>1</sup> ICS process – PRS sponsors for major international events:  
[https://intranet.edascout.eda.admin.ch/businesspublisher/layouts/shared/flink.jsp?exportname=GPMEDA\\_Datenbank&modelguid=b03d80e0-32e0-11e2-294f-0050569b639b](https://intranet.edascout.eda.admin.ch/businesspublisher/layouts/shared/flink.jsp?exportname=GPMEDA_Datenbank&modelguid=b03d80e0-32e0-11e2-294f-0050569b639b)

Passive sponsorship contracts of over **CHF 5,000** (incl. VAT) must be entered in the electronic contract management system (ESPRIT or FDFA VM). Organisational units that do not draw up their contracts themselves in the contract management system should contact the Contracts Office of the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement.

The contract should always record whether the services to be provided are cash or in-kind, including any value added tax (VAT). Only when it is clear that no (Swiss or foreign) VAT is payable may net values be budgeted.

### Signatory powers

Financial authority to approve internal credits is governed by FDFA Directive 301-0 on Financial Authority, and its Annex 1. Authorisation levels must take into account not only internal federal government resources but also the overall financial commitments to be entered into by the FDFA, i.e. including sponsorship funding. The heads of the representations abroad hold financial authority for the global budget allocated to them.

Authority to sign contracts with external partners is governed by FDFA Directive 331-0 on Contracts and Certain Treaties, and its Annex 1b. As a rule, contracts should be concluded by the signatures of two persons for the FDFA, at least one of whom must hold financial authority for the financial commitment in question.

## 5.2.6 Implementation phase

### Provision of services by the sponsor and the FDFA

The principal element of the implementation phase is the provision of services by the sponsor, on the one hand, and by the FDFA, on the other.

- In the case of general in-kind services from the partner, it is essential to specify possible delivery times and locations, for example, prior to the event as well as in the contract. This makes it possible to issue a formal warning to the partner if the services are not provided within the agreed schedule.
- In the case of cash contributions, it is important to check regularly that the partner is complying with the payment plan that has been agreed in advance. This plan should also be included in the contract. If the partners do not pay their contribution as agreed, they may be issued with a formal warning. If necessary the FDFA may also withhold or reduce its own services.
- The FDFA must make sure that the partner is included early on in its communication activities (public relations, on-line, social media, etc.), and that the contractually agreed rules are observed.

## 5.2.7 Follow-up

To evaluate and measure the success of a project under Switzerland's Strategy for Communication Abroad – and thus the success of the related sponsorship – the project must incorporate pre-defined criteria that have been included from the very start, at the project design stage.

The results of sponsorship of an individual project or event are measured using the following tools:

- Partner questionnaire
- Media coverage (quantitative and qualitative)
- Impact on target groups (direct and indirect)

Following the end of the project, the results of the evaluation should be prepared in such a way that they can be incorporated in the final report and, above all, presented to the partners and sponsors. They will also be used to optimise future FDFA projects.

### Partner questionnaire

Directly after the event, a questionnaire may be sent to partners to gather feedback on a number of points:

- How happy the partner is with how the event was organised
- How useful it was for the partner to participate in the event
- Any suggestions on how to improve future projects

Questionnaires provide important information that can be used when implementing projects in future.

Where major projects are concerned, it is advisable to talk directly with the partner.

### Compilation of media clippings/clips

Also immediately after the event, a compilation can be made of the various media clippings from national and regional papers, specialist magazines and clips from TV and radio outlets.

### Internal report

The media clippings provide a general overview of how the event was perceived. This can then be built upon with a detailed assessment based on the objectives of Switzerland's communication abroad, covering the following main points:

- Quantitative media coverage
  - Media reach/circulation (reader, viewer and listener contacts)
  - Added value/market value of customer contacts reached
  - Number of clicks on websites/videos, social media activities
  - Number of requests from journalists for written, oral or in-person interviews, or media briefings



- Qualitative media coverage
  - Tone/approval (breakdown of positive, neutral and negative reporting)
  - Penetration index: number of times that a topic, term, actor or product has been mentioned in specific media segments
- Direct target group impact
  - Visitor questionnaire to measure before/after impact, information on visitors and visitor behaviour, materials handed out (give-aways, informational materials, etc.), uptake, sales figures
- Indirect target group impact
  - Newsletter subscriptions, web traffic, social media, advertising (broadcast TV ads and reach, etc.)
- Financial impact
  - Shop and restaurant sales, revenue shares, rental total, occupancy of VIP lounge, etc.

## **Evaluation**

Once the most important findings have been compiled based on this report, these facts and figures on FDFA activities will be incorporated into the project evaluation and made available to PRS online. In the case of major events, findings are submitted to the Federal Council in the form of a final report.

## **Information for partners**

Finally, an abridged version of the evaluation report is presented to the partner. Smaller-scale events may not always require a detailed evaluation. However, partners should receive at minimum some photographs from the event, the press review and a thank-you letter. This helps to maintain the relationship in the interests of cooperation on future projects.



# 6 Active sponsorship: the FDFA as sponsor

In the case of active sponsorship, the FDFA makes a financial contribution to a private partner's project. In return, the FDFA is included in the associated communication activities. Services rendered and services received are of equal value.

If the FDFA is primarily interested in supporting the partner's event, and the communication services it receives in return are considerably smaller in scope than its financial contribution, the relationship is not classified as sponsorship. Rather, the FDFA's contribution is more like a subsidy in the form of a grant. However, with the exception of the provisions on procurement, the principles set out in these Guidelines should also be observed in such cases.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Federal Act of 5 October 1990 on Financial Assistance and Subsidies (SubA; SR 616.1). Financial contributions without services in return are not subject to VAT.

Sponsorship support from a representation for third-party activities usually requires authorisation from head office. Depending on the project and subject matter, authorisation may be given by Presence Switzerland or the SDC, etc. Exceptions to this rule are small-scale projects financed by an allocation in the representation's global budget, and services provided in relation to guest invitations, which can be posted to the global budget as entertainment expenses.

The FDFA must nonetheless be able at all times to review and verify that its sponsorship support is used properly and for its intended purpose, and that the beneficiary has provided the agreed services in return, e.g. publicity or listing as a sponsor. There are two options for active sponsorship: the FDFA may be asked to become a sponsor, or it may actively look for a partner to sponsor.

This form of sponsorship is very rare in practice. Despite this, active sponsorship is defined and governed by the sections that follow.

## 6.1 Balance and visibility

### Support from the FDFA must be made visible

In a partnership based on active sponsorship, it is essential that the FDFA gains real benefits in terms of Switzerland's communication abroad. This is achieved, for example, by the

partner integrating the FDFA in its marketing and communication activities, or the FDFA organising its own events and projects within the context of the partnership.

## 6.2 Process

### 6.2.1 Analysis

#### Budget

As with all projects, a clear financing plan must be drawn up. At the start of an active sponsorship, there must be a detailed analysis of whether or not the necessary financial resources are available, and of who is responsible for covering which costs. To simplify internal budget planning, the partner should submit a budget showing exactly what funding is required.

### 6.2.2 Reviewing enquiries or identifying potential partners

The purpose for which FDFA funding will be used must be clear from the potential partner's enquiry. It is also key that the FDFA find out about other sponsors who may be involved, to determine the financial situation of the partner's project. This will help to establish whether or not that project is genuinely viable, or if there is still too great a shortfall in sponsorship.

The next step is to consider how suitable the project is in terms of Switzerland's communication abroad, and what benefits can be obtained from such a partnership.

### Tendering procedure

Contracts for active sponsorship are subject to the Federal Act and Federal Ordinance on Public Procurement (PPA and PPO respectively).<sup>3</sup> Active sponsorship must be considered a contract for services under Art. 8 para. 2 (c) PPA.

The first step is to define the level of financial contribution in a particular case.<sup>4</sup> The amount determines which procedure should be followed. The three procedures are as follows:

- **Direct award procedure:** the direct award procedure applies to the procurement of services of a value of under CHF 150,000 excl. VAT (Art. 21 para. 1 and Annex 4 PPA).<sup>5</sup> Such contracts may be awarded directly. Where possible and reasonable, it is still advisable to obtain several bids.
- **Invitation procedure:** the invitation procedure applies to the procurement of services of a value of over CHF 150,000 but less than CHF 230,000 excl. VAT.<sup>6</sup> It is based on Art. 20 PPA. The FDFA may decide which bidders are to be invited directly to submit bids, without an invitation to tender. Where possible, the FDFA must obtain a minimum of three bids. At least one of these must be from a region where a different language is spoken.
- **Public tendering procedure:** a public tendering procedure must be used to procure services of a value of CHF 230,000 or more, excl. VAT (Arts. 18 and 19 and Annex 4 PPA). There are two types of public tendering procedure: the **open** procedure and the **selective** procedure. Open procedures have only one stage, during which any interested bidder may submit a bid. Selective procedures have two stages. First, all interested bidders may submit an expression of interest. In the second stage, the FDFA decides which of the bidders (at least three) may submit a bid. It is advisable to contact the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement in such cases.

With all three procedures, and public tenders in particular, attention is paid to corporate social responsibility and sustainability as part of the potential partner's corporate culture.

Under certain conditions, a sponsorship contract may also be awarded on the basis of a direct award or exceptional procedure, even if the amounts are in excess of the threshold values listed above. This is notably the case where

only one partner can be considered because of technical or artistic reasons. In this situation, the '[Reasons for the direct award procedure \(and other exceptions to the legally prescribed tendering procedure\)](#)' form<sup>7</sup> must be completed and submitted to the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement for review and a response before any contract is signed.<sup>8</sup>

The forms for publishing mandates and justifying direct award procedures, as well as further information on procurement within the FDFA are available on the intranet under: [Services – Law and contracts – Procurement – Procurement Toolbox](#)

### Opportunities and risks – analysis and due diligence

Given that the involved parties must also serve Switzerland's communication abroad, public sector entities should select their private sector partners carefully and according to clear criteria. In addition to the opportunities that may arise from working with a specific partner, it is essential that the FDFA identifies the possible risks. The principles for sponsor partnerships set out in Section 2 apply here.

The following aspects should be factored into the analysis of opportunities and risks, as well as the required due diligence process (see checklist in Annex).

- ✓ **'Swissness' factor**  
Is the potential private partner a company with Swiss origins, or a Swiss brand?
- ✓ **Company's interests**  
Has enough been done to clarify the interests and expectations of the company concerned?
- ✓ **Are corporate social responsibility and sustainability part of the corporate culture?**  
Indicators of this kind of commitment include the application of CSR guidelines such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact (including membership of the relevant national network), non-financial reporting, ISO certifications etc., as well as specific undertakings in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ✓ **Negative or controversial company practices**  
Have negative or controversial company practices been observed that might result in negative media coverage in the near future, or has the company already been the subject of negative headlines? Well-known examples are not complying with workplace health and safety regulations and working conditions for staff, particularly in developing and emerging countries; causing pollution from non-ecological production methods; human rights violations; corruption allegations, etc.
- ✓ **Recognition/image**  
Does the company already enjoy a minimum level of recognition and a positive image among foreign target groups,

3 By contrast, subsidies or grants are subject not to procurement regulations, but to the Subsidies Act. The constitutional principles of equal treatment for interested parties, transparent selection based on objective criteria and the efficient use of public funds all apply.

4 Care should be exercised with cumulative contributions which might be accrued over a partnership of several years. In such cases, they must be added together into one aggregate amount so that the correct tendering procedure can be selected. If the partnership is open-ended, the amount for a four-year period should be used as a basis.

5 See FDFA Directive on the Public Procurement of Services, Supplies of Goods and Construction Work (Section 3 sub-section 2)

6 See FDFA Directive on the Public Procurement of Services, Supplies of Goods and Construction Work (Section 3 sub-section 2)

7 [Services – Law and contracts – Procurement – Procurement Toolbox – 0. Choice of procedure – Direct award procedure](#)

8 See FDFA Directive on the Public Procurement of Services, Supplies of Goods and Construction Work (Section 4 Art. 26).

which could be transferred to Swiss public sector entities by means of active sponsorship?

✓ **Target image**

Does the company want to project the same image as Switzerland's communication abroad? The target image may differ slightly depending on the target country and the project.

✓ **Risk of negative image transfer**

Are there any past, recurring, current or foreseeable incidents that might impact negatively on the federal government as the sponsor?

✓ **Sub-contractors**

If the company uses sub-contractors, it is also important to check if there are any negative or controversial practices associated with this contractor. If the company does use sub-contractors, there is also the danger of covert sponsorship.

### **Making contact**

Where the FDFA actively seeks out a potential partner, contact should be made in writing by email or letter, or in a face-to-face appointment. This does not apply to mandates that must be put out to public tender.

## **6.2.3 Negotiation and contract conclusion phase**

### **Negotiating the FDFA offer/services to be provided by the sponsored party**

If both parties are interested in collaborating, what is on offer and what will be provided in return must be negotiated and specified. The next step is then to set down in full the FDFA's financing offer and what the partner is expected to provide. If there is a call for tenders, the expected services are set out beforehand in the specification document. All promotion of the partnership with the FDFA must be defined and governed in detail in advance in the contract. This must include the use of images. To this end, the contract must state that all communications in connection with the partnership with the FDFA must be approved by the FDFA in advance.

### **Concluding the contract**

Standard templates for sponsorship contracts (English, French, German and Italian) can be downloaded from the intranet (see [Services – Law and contracts – Standard contracts – Sponsoring](#)). If key provisions in the standard contract need to be amended or another template is used, the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement must be consulted.

Any active sponsorship worth more than **CHF 1,500** must have a written contract signed by the parties involved. For amounts below this threshold, the terms may also be agreed by other means, specifically an email exchange. What is important is that the key elements of the relationship are clearly documented. These are the form/scope of inclusion in communications, sponsorship amount, purpose of the event and dates/deadlines. Active sponsorship contracts must only be entered in

the electronic contract management system (ESPRIT or FDFA VM) if they are over **CHF 5,000** (incl. VAT). Organisational units that do not draw up their contracts themselves in the contract management system should contact the Contracts Office of the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement.

If the relationship is not one of sponsorship but of the granting of subsidies (see introduction to Section 6), the standard templates for agreements to provide financial support should be used (e.g. for the representations' small-scale projects), or the sponsorship templates should be adapted accordingly in consultation with the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement.

The contract should always record whether the services to be provided are cash or in-kind, including any value added tax (VAT). Only when it is clear that no (Swiss or foreign) VAT is payable may net values be budgeted.

## **Signatory powers**

Financial authority to approve internal credits is governed by FDFA Directive 301-0 on Financial Authority, and its Annex 1. The heads of the representations abroad hold financial authority for the global budget allocated to them.

Authority to sign contracts with external partners is governed by FDFA Directive 331-0 on Contracts and Certain Treaties, and its Annex 1b. As a rule, contracts should be concluded by the signatures of two persons for the FDFA, at least one of whom must hold financial authority for the financial commitment in question.

## **6.2.4 Implementation phase**

### **Provision of services by the FDFA and the sponsored party**

The principal element of the implementation phase is the provision of services by the FDFA, on the one hand, and by the sponsored party, on the other. The FDFA must comply with the agreed payment plan, while also checking that the partner is providing the agreed services in return. The partner must be notified if they fail to fulfil their obligations.

## **6.2.5 Follow-up**

### **Final report**

The success of active sponsorship should also be evaluated. This might be done by analysing media coverage (both quantitative and qualitative) or the impact on target groups (both direct and indirect). Following the end of the project, the results of the evaluation should be prepared in such a way that they can be incorporated in the final report. They will also be used by the FDFA to optimise communication abroad activities in the future.

# 7. General notes

## 7.1 CRM database with the contact details of Swiss companies in Switzerland and abroad

- We recommend creating a customer relationship management (CRM) system for sponsors and partners in Outlook contacts. The system can:
  - manage contacts efficiently
  - assign contacts to user-defined categories
  - filter sponsors according to sector, sponsorship objectives, corporate values
  - create a history (chronological/running text)
  - send out mass mailings from the program.

## 7.2 Client relations

It is important to maintain good relations with existing partners. In contrast to acquiring new clients, client relations takes comparatively little effort and requires only the following measures:

### Communication

- Maintain regular contact with partners via project meetings and invitations to official events
- Provide regular project updates in an e-newsletter

## 7.3 Sponsorship Competence Centre

### Head of Competence Centre:

#### FDFA, Presence Switzerland

Peter Fankhauser, dep. head of Presence Switzerland  
+41 58 465 07 47, [peter.fankhauser@eda.admin.ch](mailto:peter.fankhauser@eda.admin.ch)

#### FDFA, Presence Switzerland

##### General sponsoring advice

Celia Arribas, head of Sponsoring and hospitality  
+41 58 465 42 53, [celia.arribas@eda.admin.ch](mailto:celia.arribas@eda.admin.ch)

#### FDFA, Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement

Freiburgstrasse 130, 3003 Bern  
+41 31 323 89 05, [contracts\\_procurement@eda.admin.ch](mailto:contracts_procurement@eda.admin.ch)

### Advice on contract law (general)

Oliver Markwalder, head of contract law Advisory Service  
+41 58 46 44063, [oliver.markwalder@eda.admin.ch](mailto:oliver.markwalder@eda.admin.ch)

### Advice on contract law for sponsorship

Daniel Pose, adviser on contract law  
+41 58 46 39255, [daniel.pose@eda.admin.ch](mailto:daniel.pose@eda.admin.ch)

### Advice on financial procedures

Silvan Meier, dep. head of Accounting  
+41 58 46 23289, [finanzen@eda.admin.ch](mailto:finanzen@eda.admin.ch)

## 8. Concluding remarks

In these Guidelines on cooperation with sponsors, the FDFA very deliberately places the emphasis on image transfer between 'official' Switzerland and Swiss companies. This is because partnerships with private sector actors is crucial to cultivating Switzerland's image around the globe.

Since it may be assumed that public perceptions of economic sectors in Switzerland and abroad are in a constant state of flux, the FDFA makes its decisions on potential sponsor partnerships on a case-by-case basis. With this approach, the representations, on behalf of the federal government, have a central role to play in exercising due diligence.

These Guidelines are thus intended as a tool for FDFA staff so that, in their analyses and due diligence processes, they are able at an early stage to identify not only the opportunities of partnerships with potential sponsors, but also the risks.

Finally, where need be, the FDFA Guidelines might also serve as a guide to other federal agencies or organisations providing services to the federal government.

# 9. Glossary

**Active sponsorship:** Active sponsorship means that the FDFA takes on the role of sponsor, providing financial support to third parties as a means of cultivating Switzerland's image abroad.

**Cash/in-kind benefits:** Cash benefit = monetary payment; In-kind benefit = goods or services

**Communication abroad:** Communication abroad aims to safeguard Switzerland's interests abroad using public relations tools. It actively helps shape perceptions of Switzerland abroad by explaining Switzerland, its positions and its strengths, as well as its domestic and foreign policy actions, through targeted communication activities.

**Global budget:** The annual budget of the FDFA and the representations abroad.

**Image transfer:** Switzerland's image benefits from the vibrancy of the Swiss economy and its products. In return, a positive image of Switzerland represents a key success factor and added value for the export industry, while influencing factors such as foreign policy scope, appeal as a business location, exchange among the business and scientific communities and tourism. Cooperation with the private sector is of enormous importance to Switzerland's communication abroad, and offers an opportunity to further safeguard the nation's interests.

**Passive sponsorship:** Passive sponsorship means that the FDFA receives benefits from a sponsor in the interests of cultivating Switzerland's image abroad.

**Public-private partnership:** A public-private partnership consists of long-term collaboration between the public and private sectors. Under a public-private partnership, the federal government and private sector entities share the costs, risks and responsibility of a specific project. As a rule, public-private projects will not be entered into by representations, or used for major events. Within the FDFA, long-term arrangements with the private sector are entered into primarily by the SDC in the context of its development projects. This is referred to as private sector engagement (PSE). Such projects fall outside of the scope of these Guidelines. Instead, they are governed by the relevant SDC policies.

**Sponsor acquisition:** Refers to all activities to secure sponsors.

**Sponsor partnership:** A sponsor partnership is where the FDFA and one or more corporate entities form a collaborative venture. The services that are to be provided by each party are clearly defined. Funding and/or benefits in kind are exchanged for visibility/hospitality and image transfer, and the sponsorship deal is geared to the optimum achievement of the parties' individual aims, i.e. a win-win situation. The objective is benefit and satisfaction for the parties' common target groups.

**Sponsorship brochure:** The sponsorship brochure is a public document which generally gives a brief description of the project with its key facts and figures, lists sponsor categories and sets out the services to be provided by each party, as well as giving examples and the names of who to contact with questions.

**Sponsorship Competence Centre:** The Sponsorship Competence Centre (Presence Switzerland) is on hand to answer questions and to provide risk management support to the representations and to head office. When assessing legal risks and compliance issues, Presence Switzerland works closely with the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement (CCP).

**Sponsorship concept:** The sponsorship concept is an internal document that should contain the following elements: status analysis, context analysis with regard to institutional partnerships, risk analysis and due diligence with regard to potential sponsor partnership, a brief description of the project/event, the project objectives (derived from Switzerland's Strategy for Communication Abroad), a budget, time frame, sponsorship objectives, sponsorship services, design, value of sponsorship and evaluation.

## Tendering procedure

1. **Direct award procedure:** The direct award procedure applies to the procurement of goods or services of a value of under CHF 150,000 excl. VAT (Art. 21 para. 1 and Annex 4 of the Federal Act on Public Procurement). Such contracts may be awarded directly. Where possible and reasonable, it is still advisable to obtain several bids.
2. **Invitation procedure:** The invitation procedure applies to the procurement of goods or services of a value of over CHF 150,000 but less than CHF 230,000 excl. VAT. It is based on Art. 20 PPA. The FDFA may decide which bidders are to be invited directly to submit bids, without an invitation to tender. Where possible, the FDFA must obtain a minimum of three bids. At least one of these must be from a region where a different language is spoken.

3. **Public tendering procedure:** A public tendering procedure must be used to procure goods or services of a value of CHF 230,000 or more, excl. VAT (Arts. 18 and 19 and Annex 4 of the Federal Act on Public Procurement). There are two types of public tendering procedure: the open procedure and the selective procedure. Open procedures have only one stage, during which any interested bidder may make a bid. Selective procedures have two stages. First, all interested bidders may submit an expression of interest. In the second stage, the FDFA then decides which of the bidders (at least three) may submit a bid. It is advisable to contact the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement in such cases.

# A Annex 1: Summaries

## A.1 Passive sponsorship

### GENERAL

1. The principles for sponsor partnerships set out in Section 2 are observed in full.

2. Events of a strictly official nature (such as political conferences) may not be sponsored. Exceptions to this rule are subject to the prior consent of the Sponsorship Competence Centre.

3. Major events: sponsor partnerships with companies that are able to contribute to the achievement of the sponsorship goals (in cash and/or in kind), but that are associated with considerable risks, must be referred to the head of the FDFA for approval.

4. Commercial services and opportunities to sell must not overshadow the event. The identity and objectives of the project must always be at the forefront. Partners must communicate their event-related sales revenue to the FDFA transparently.

5. Sponsorship must not result in 'selling' networking opportunities to individual private partners exclusively.

6. If the residence is made available for export promotion events in combination with sponsorship under the culture fund, the two parts must be clearly separated in the contract and the services concerned listed individually (set off of actual costs and fees, on a time-spent basis, for services provided by the representation in accordance with the Ordinance on the Fees and/or the sponsorship contribution in return for inclusion in communications). The partner must have the choice, beyond the export promotion event, of also sponsoring the culture fund (see [Services – Finance – Instructions, leaflets, tools and forms – Safeguarding Swiss interests](#) (versions in [DE](#), [FR](#), [IT](#) and [EN](#))).

7. Information and communication must be factual and clear. The distinction between public sector and private sector content must be evident.

8. When dealing with partners, it is also important to comply at all times with the relevant regulations stipulating no giving or accepting of gifts/benefits, integrity, anti-corruption and reporting obligations in accordance with the code of conduct for federal employees, staff posted abroad and contracting partners, as well as the corresponding EDAscout processes. Individuals involved in the decision-making process relating to procurement or contract awards may not accept gifts worth more than CHF 40.

9. Cooperation with a foreign company is permitted provided it has been verified that it is not in competition with a Swiss company in the same sector. The company's goals and values must also be congruent with those of the federal government, and positive image transfer must be assured.

### TENDERING PROCEDURE

1. No direct association between calls for tender and sponsorship: the FDFA must not exploit its position in relation to bidders to use sponsorship opportunities to suppress prices in calls for tenders. Negotiations on sponsorship services must not be part of the tendering procedure.

2. All potential interested parties must be provided with the same information. This means that the FDFA is obliged to use all the available channels.

3. If there are several qualified interested parties, they must be treated equally. The selection process must be fair, transparent and based on objective criteria, and it must also be documented. This is particularly important if the partner has been promised sector exclusivity.



## CONTRACT

1. The template for sponsorship contracts that is available on the intranet applies to agreements concluded both in Switzerland and abroad.
2. If the contracting partner rejects the FDFA's standard contract, please consult the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement (CCP).
3. The services provided by the two parties must be set out in as much detail as possible in the contract to avoid any problems with interpretation in the event of differences of opinion.
4. It is important with regard to the services provided by the FDFA that the rights that are granted to the partner are explained and greater detail provided, including the applicable terms of use. In particular, the contract must contain a provision stating that all of the partner's communications in relation to the event, any and all use of official images of the event or of images taken by the partner or by third parties during the event must be approved in advance by the FDFA.
5. If certain clauses in the standard contract need to be amended or omitted when drafting the contract, the CCP must be consulted in advance.
6. Contracts with a value of CHF 1,500 or more must be in writing and, if their value is CHF 5,000 or more, registered in ESPRIT or submitted to the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement to be entered in the federal government's contract management system VM Bund.

## FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT FOR FDFA PROJECTS

1. Financial contributions from private sponsors that are not used for the event may not under any circumstances be used for the FDFA's own purposes. These contributions must be reimbursed unless there is a written agreement concerning an alternative use (e.g. for another of the representation's projects). It is recommended that this be governed by the contract directly, if such a contract must be drawn up in accordance with Section 3.6. If there is no such agreement and reimbursement is not possible, these contributions should be posted to the 'Other miscellaneous income' ledger.

2. In-kind contributions made available by sponsors must also be returned, unless there is a written agreement with the sponsor concerning their continued use. It is recommended that this be governed by the contract directly, if such a contract must be drawn up in accordance with Section 3.6.

3. Each event requires a separate accounts receivable account with a unique identifier. All incoming and outgoing payments must be booked via this account. Once the project has been completed, the account should be closed.

4. Contributions from sponsors should not be sought if there are no specific projects for which they would be used. Culture funds may be created only to the extent that they can be used on an ongoing basis.

## FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT FOR MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

1. Financial contributions from private sponsors should be booked to general ledger account 4290001000 along with the internal order agreed with FDFA Finance.
2. Should the event be cancelled or should Switzerland not participate in the event, contractual provisions should govern the extent to which the sponsors' financial and in-kind contributions are returned.
3. Whether or not in-kind sponsorship items made available by sponsors must be returned after the event must also be defined. It is recommended that this be governed by the contract directly, if such a contract must be drawn up in accordance with Section 3.6.

## A.2 Active sponsorship

### GENERAL

1. Information and communication must be factual and clear. The distinction between public sector and private sector content must be evident.
2. The FDFA's involvement in an event must serve the public interest. Official self-promotion cannot be its sole objective.
3. To avoid duplicating efforts, it is always important before entering into an active sponsorship arrangement to find out if other federal agencies are also supporting a given project.
4. When dealing with partners, it is also important to comply at all times with the relevant regulations stipulating no giving or accepting of gifts/benefits, integrity, anti-corruption and reporting obligations in accordance with the code of conduct for federal employees, staff posted abroad and contracting partners, as well as the corresponding EDAscout processes. Individuals involved in the decision-making process relating to procurement or contract awards may not accept gifts whatsoever. A zero-tolerance policy applies.

### TENDERING PROCEDURE

1. The conditions and procedures of procurement law must be observed.
2. All qualified interested parties must be treated equally. The selection process must be fair, transparent and based on objective criteria, and it must also be documented. This applies in particular to cases in which the FDFA is collaborating with one partner exclusively.
3. If the reference values listed under Section 6.2.2 are exceeded (over CHF 150,000), the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement (CCP) must be contacted to determine the next steps of the tendering procedure.
4. Care should be exercised with cumulated contributions which might be accrued over a partnership of several years. In such cases, they must be added together into one aggregate amount so that the correct tendering procedure can be selected. If the partnership is open-ended, the amount for a four-year

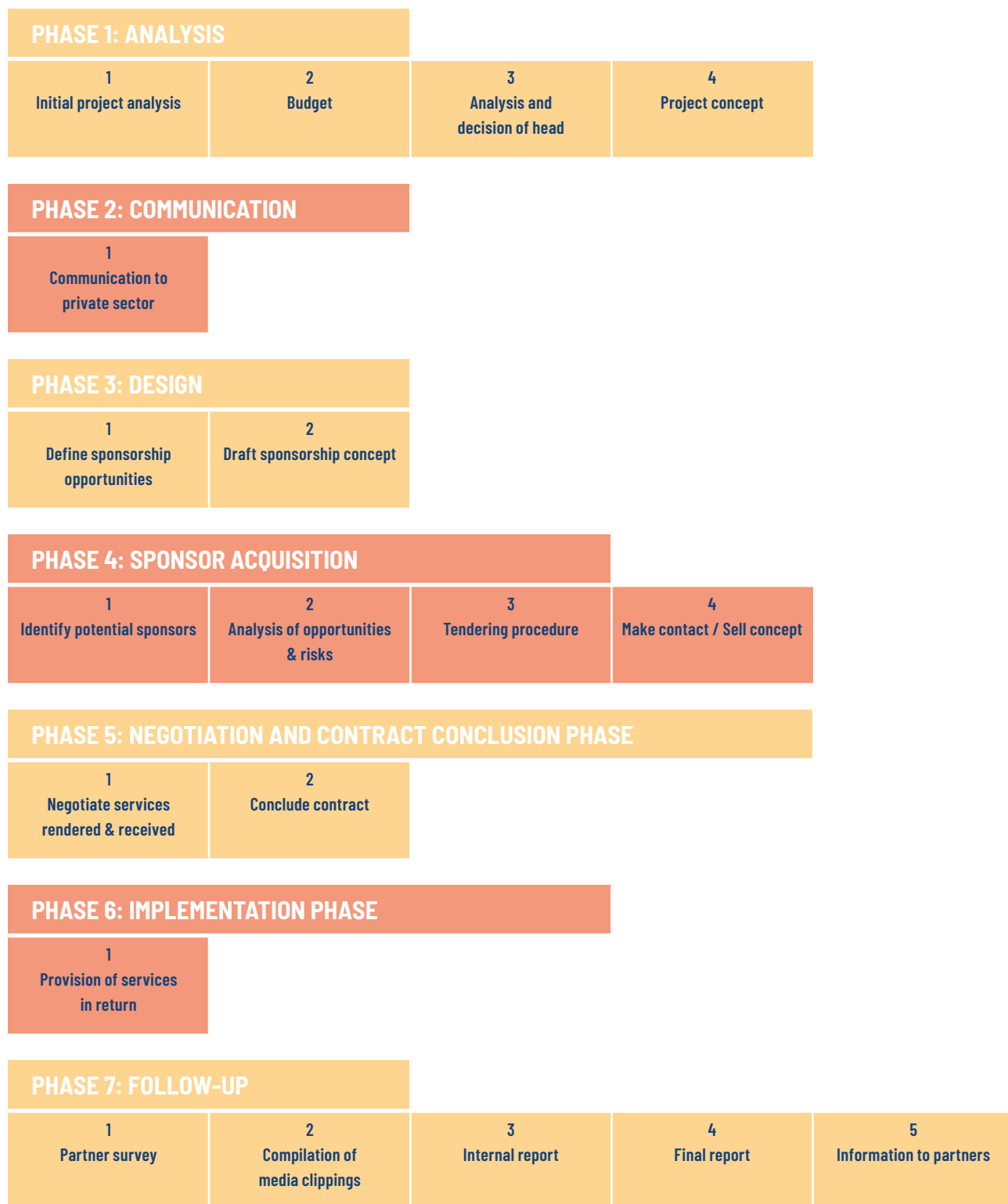
period should be used as a basis. It is also important to consider whether or not the FDFA is actually authorised to support a particular project over a period of several years

### CONTRACT

1. The template for sponsorship contracts that is available on the intranet applies to agreements concluded both in Switzerland and abroad.
2. If the contracting partner rejects the FDFA's standard contract, please consult the Competence Centre for Contracts and Procurement (CCP).
3. The services provided by both the parties to the contract must be set out in as much detail as possible to avoid any problems with interpretation in the event of differences of opinion.
4. It is important with regard to the services provided by the FDFA that the rights that are granted to the partner are explained and greater detail provided, including the applicable terms of use. In particular, the contract must contain a provision stating that all of the partner's communications in relation to the event, any and all use of official images of the event or of images taken by the partner or by third parties during the event must be approved in advance by the FDFA.
5. If certain clauses in the standard contract need to be amended or omitted when drafting the contract, the CCP must be consulted in advance.

# B Annex 2: Processes

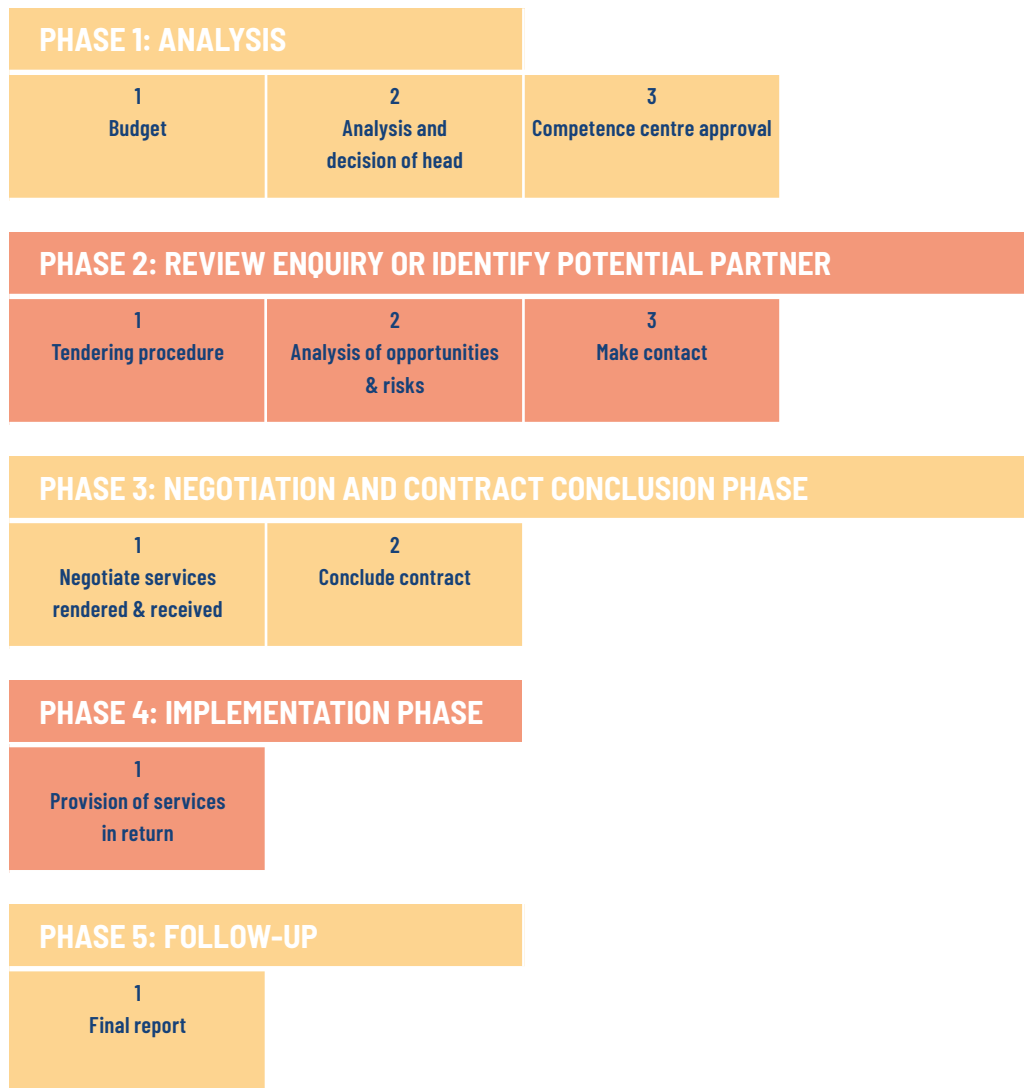
## B.1 Passive sponsorship process – FDFA projects



## B.2 ICS process for major international event sponsorship

[Link](#)

## B.3 Active sponsorship process – FDFA projects



# C Annex 3: Checklists

## C.1 Checklist for passive sponsorship

### Definition of passive sponsorship

1. The FDFA receives funding and/or in-kind benefits from a private partner which are used to finance part of a project.

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. In return, the FDFA includes the partner in its communication activities.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If both answers are 'Yes', this is a case of passive sponsorship.

### Type of project

1. The event/project is strictly official in nature

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', sponsorship should be avoided.

### Selection of private partner

1. Is the private partner a company of Swiss origin or a Swiss brand?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', whether or not the foreign company is in competition with a Swiss company in the same sector, and the extent to which a partnership would add to the appeal of a given project, must be determined.

2. Does the company already enjoy a minimum degree of recognition and/or a positive image among the foreign target groups, which could be transferred to public sector entities via passive sponsorship?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to clearly specify how the FDFA would benefit from the partnership.

3. Does the company want to project the same image as Switzerland's communication abroad? (At least one image-related objective should be the same; objectives may differ slightly depending on the target country and the project)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to consider whether it would be possible to at least create an association between the company's image and one of the image-related objectives of Switzerland's communication abroad.

4. Does the inclusion of the company add to the impact and appeal of the project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to clearly specify again how the FDFA would benefit from the partnership.

5. Are corporate social responsibility and sustainability part of the corporate culture? Indicators include the application of CSR guidelines such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises<sup>9</sup>, the UN Global Compact (including membership of the relevant national network), non-financial reporting, ISO certifications, etc.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', sponsorship should be avoided.

6. Are the partner's financial and operational resources assured? (Where appropriate, the public sector entity may ask the private partner to provide proof of their financial and business standing.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is definitely 'No', sponsorship should be avoided.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises\\_9789264060326-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises_9789264060326-en)

### Questions on corporate reputation and public perceptions in Switzerland and abroad

1. Are there any past, recurring, current or foreseeable incidents that have resulted in negative media coverage in the past or might attract such coverage in the near future, and which might lead to the transfer of a negative image to Switzerland?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', a sponsor partnership should be avoided. Major events: if the answer is 'Yes', the sponsor partnership must be subject to a thorough review and be referred to the head of the FDFA for approval before any negotiations begin.

2. Does the company have sub-contractors at which negative or controversial company practices have been observed, and/or is there a danger of covert sponsorship via the sub-contractor?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', any partnership should undergo a thorough review.

## C.2 Checklist of active sponsorship

### Definition of active sponsorship

1. The FDFA makes a financial contribution to a private partner's project.

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. In return, the FDFA is included in the partner's communication activities.

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. The funding or benefit provided by the FDFA and the partner's services in return are more or less equal.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If all of the answers are 'Yes', this is a case for active sponsorship.

### Type of project

1. Does the FDFA's involvement in the partner's event/project serve the public interest?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', active sponsorship may be considered.

### Selection of private partner

1. Is the potential private partner a company with Swiss origins, or a Swiss brand?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', whether or not the foreign company is in competition with a Swiss company in the same sector, and the extent to which a partnership would add to the appeal of a given project, must be determined.

2. Does the company already enjoy a minimum level of recognition and a positive image among foreign target groups, which could be transferred to Swiss public sector entities by means of active sponsorship?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to clearly specify how the FDFA would benefit from the partnership.

3. Does the company want to project the same image as Switzerland's communication abroad? The target image may differ slightly depending on the target country and the project.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to consider whether it would be possible to at least create an association between the company's image and one of the image-related objectives of Switzerland's communication abroad.

4. Are corporate social responsibility and sustainability part of the corporate culture? Indicators include the application of CSR guidelines such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises<sup>10</sup>, the UN Global Compact (including membership of the relevant national network, non-financial reporting, ISO certifications, etc.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', sponsorship should be avoided.

5. Can the partner guarantee the financial and operational resources for the project? (Where appropriate, the public sector entity may ask the private partner to provide proof of their financial and business standing.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'No', it is important to consider whether it is actually realistic for the partner to mobilise enough sponsorship money to carry out the project.

### Questions on corporate reputation and public perceptions in Switzerland and abroad

1. Are there any past, recurring, current or foreseeable incidents that have resulted in negative media coverage in the past or might attract such coverage in the near future, and which might lead to the transfer of a negative image to Switzerland?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', a sponsor partnership should be avoided.

2. Does the company have sub-contractors at which negative or controversial company practices have been observed, and/or is there a danger of covert sponsorship via the sub-contractor?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', any partnership should undergo a thorough review.

### Tendering procedure

1. Is the expected contract volume under CHF 150,000 excl. VAT?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', a direct award procedure applies. It is still advisable to consider several options.

2. Does the contract volume exceed the threshold value of CHF 150,000 excl. VAT?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', an invitation procedure is required.

3. Does the contract volume exceed the threshold value of CHF 230,000 excl. VAT?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is 'Yes', a public tendering procedure is required

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises\\_9789264060326](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises_9789264060326)

# D Annex 4: Examples

## D.1 List of partners for the current year on the embassy website

The embassy website must always feature a regularly updated list of partners supporting events and/or projects during the current year. This is intended to increase external transparency about the partnerships entered into by Switzerland's embassies abroad.

Mandatory information – please note: the list must give the name of the partner, as well as the events and/or projects that they have sponsored or are sponsoring during the current year, irrespective of the nature and scope of cooperation.

When stating current-year partners, you may wish to use the following example, which complies with the guidance given above.

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Sponsored events/projects</b>
Omega AG	<i>Soirée Suisse 2020</i>
Zürich Versicherungs-Gesellschaft AG	<i>1 August 2020</i>
Salines Suisses SA	<i>Intl. Day of La Francophonie 2020</i>
Caran d'Ache SA	<i>Soirée Suisse 2020</i>
Nestlé Suisse SA	<i>Soirée Suisse 2020</i>
UVAVINS – Cave de la Côte	<i>Intl. D. of La Francophonie 2020</i>

## D.2 Placement of partner logos on the embassy's sub-page and/or newsletter

The golden rule here is that whenever sponsors are named, there must be a clear association with the event in question. Only sponsors that have actually actively supported the event may be mentioned.

Position: partner logos must always be placed on the page for the event in question and not on the embassy's home page. Make sure that the event title is more prominent than the partner logos.

Below you will find three examples of where to place partner logos, based on these Guidelines.



Example 1: Partners named without any logos

**'Soirée Suisse'**  
**on 25 January 2021 at 7.00 pm**  
**at the Swiss embassy in XYZ**

Our warmest thanks to our sponsors for their valued support!

Omega SA  
Zürich Versicherungs-Gesellschaft AG  
Salines Suisses SA  
Caran d'Ache SA  
Nestlé Suisse SA  
UVAVINS – Cave de la Côte

Example 2: Partner logos with no hierarchy

**'Soirée Suisse'**  
**on 25 January 2021 at 7.00 pm**  
**at the Swiss embassy in XYZ**

Our warmest thanks to our sponsors for their valued support!



# 'Soirée Suisse' on 25 January 2021 at 7.00 pm at the Swiss embassy in XYZ

Our warmest thanks to our sponsors for their valued support!

Diamond Sponsors

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Gold Sponsors

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Silver Sponsor

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Bronze Sponsor

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