

Bern, January 2025

SAKK / AbbVie Award for Digital Innovation in Oncology & Hematology

Digitalization and the usage of artificial intelligence in hematology & oncology is a fast-moving process that transforms our approaches to diagnosis and treatment of malignant neoplasia. Innovative digital tools such as computer-based approaches related to diagnosis, therapy, prediction of response and (self-) monitoring have the potential to maximize outcomes for cancer patients.

The SAKK / AbbVie Award for digital innovation in oncology and hematology aims at supporting projects that pave the way for synergies between clinicians and information technology to improve standards of care and patient management in oncology and/or hematology.

The award is endowed with CHF 30'000 and should encourage the continuation of using or development/optimization of digital tools and/or artificial intelligence. Hence, the awarded sum is to be used for ongoing and future research within the respective research group or project.

Call for Applications

Prior to your application, please carefully read the applicable Award Rules. In case of questions, please do not hesitate to contact SAKK.

Please send your application until March 31st, 2025.

Full applications must be sent via e-mail to events@sakk.ch and shall include:

- Curriculum Vitae of the candidate
- Letter of support from your head of your current institution, which shall emphasize and highlight the achievement of the candidate relevant to the SAKK / AbbVie Award
- Project proposal max. 5 pages including the rationale, methodology, feasibility, budget and potential impact
- Publication list of the candidate
 - Publications may be primary research or review articles
 - The candidate must be an author in all publications
 - Publications must have been published in the period 2020-2025 in a peer-reviewed journal or must be accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
- If applicable, any other relevant information or documentation

Selection Process

An independent jury of experts, elected by the SAKK president, will evaluate the submitted applications based on (i) alignment with the scope of the award, (ii) quality, (iii) national and (iv) international (future) clinical impact, (v) innovative potential and novelty and (vi) feasibility.

Award Announcement

The winner of the SAKK / AbbVie Award will be announced and awarded during the SAKK semi-annual meeting on 22nd May 2025.

Award Rules

AbbVie AG distributes the SAKK / AbbVie Award with the support of the Swiss Group of Clinical Cancer Research (SAKK) and the support of an independent jury at the SAKK semi-annual meeting on May 22nd, 2025. The award will be conferred to an eligible candidate, who may be a practicing physician, clinical researcher or professional in a patient care institution/society, active in development/establishing/improvement of digital tools and/or artificial intelligence in oncology and/or hematology within Switzerland. The winner will be awarded as representative of a research group or project for outstanding scientific and/or clinical achievements within the thematic focus of the SAKK / AbbVie.

Eligible Candidates

An eligible candidate must fulfill the following criteria:

- a. Practicing physician, clinical researcher or professional in a patient care institution/society currently active in development/establishing/improvement of digital tools and/or artificial intelligence in oncology and/or hematology within Switzerland. The minimum requirement is a research activity in Switzerland from January 1st to December 31st, 2025.
- b. No age restrictions apply

Valid Applications

1. Candidates can nominate themselves
2. The application must be submitted in English
3. Resubmission of applications that did not win in past editions are permitted as long as eligibility criteria are met

Evaluation of Applications

1. An independent jury composed of 2-3 Swiss experts and the SAKK President. The SAKK President chairs the jury. He may delegate a member of the SAKK Board to chair the jury (for example if conflict of interest occurs). Employees of AbbVie must not be part of the jury
2. Jury members must not evaluate applications of their own institution or university
3. Project proposals will be evaluated only if they are deemed to be eligible and feasible
4. The independent jury will evaluate the submitted valid applications on a scale from 1-10 (1 = worst, 10 = best) for each of the following criteria:
 - a. Alignment with scope of award, i.e. potential tangible improvements for patient management and outcomes in the treatment in oncology and hematology
 - b. Quality
 - c. Potential impact of career development of applicant
 - d. Feasibility within 24 months after being awarded the grant
5. The jury elects the winner based on the evaluation scoring. In case different applicants achieve the same scoring, the top scoring applications shall be discussed amongst the jury members. The jury shall elect 1 winner by consensus. In case consensus cannot be reached, the chairman has the final decision
6. The jury is free and independent in its decisions. Its decisions are final and not subject to appeal
7. If additional expertise is needed the SAKK president can request written evaluations from additional reviewers

8. The SAKK and AbbVie may waive the SAKK / AbbVie Award for Digital Innovation in Oncology & Hematology if the jury considers none of the submitted applications worthy of support

Awarding

1. At least 2 weeks before the award ceremony, all applicants will be notified by the head of the jury and the winner shall be confidentially informed by the head of the jury about winning the SAKK / AbbVie Award
2. The winner or, if unable to attend, a representative of the winning research group or project shall present the scientific and/or clinical achievements for which the award is distributed at the SAKK semi-annual meeting on 22nd May 2025.
3. Three weeks at most after the ceremony SAKK will transfer the prize money to the winning research group or project
4. The prize money must be used for the awarded project. Future evidence should be given at the next year SAKK semi-annual meeting with a brief presentation (10 min.) on how the used money has supported further research steps. The winner must further provide a written summary of the project no later than 1 year after the award ceremony. The written summary sent to the SAKK, will be forwarded to the jury president.
5. The winning project should be concluded within 24 months after election

Role of AbbVie

1. AbbVie is the sole sponsor of the SAKK / AbbVie Award
2. AbbVie informs about the SAKK / AbbVie Award on its own website (abbvie.ch), describing the award, the candidature process and the selection of the winner
3. AbbVie must not be part of the award jury and thus must not evaluate applications
4. Together with the support of the SAKK an employee of AbbVie will announce the winner together with the jury chair and hand over the award at the SAKK semi-annual meeting on 22nd May 2025.