Swiss National Science Foundation

Bug Bounty to protect sensitive data

AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Protecting sensitive data
- Continuous and robust system protection
- Cost-effective solution

BENEFITS

- Fast and flexible implementation, ideal for agile operating environments
- New insights into security vulnerabilities through the diversity and expertise of the testers
- Expanded learning about new attack vectors

"To bug bounty, I say: Take the plunge and try it for three months. You will only discover the hidden vulnerabilities if you dare take the risk."

ANTON BRUNNER
CISO

ABOUT SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), financed by federal funds, aims to distribute research funding in an efficient and targeted manner. Researchers submit their project proposals to the SNSF, and special committees and councils decide who receives how much money. This is all done via a portal that is constantly evaluated and improved.

CHALLENGES

The SNSF's main task in security administration is to effectively control system access and maintain integrity and confidentiality. They have been carrying out regular pentests for three years. However, these are associated with long lead times and a high budget. With the transition to a more agile development model, the old methods were no longer sufficient. This prompted the SNSF to additionally investigate the feasibility of a pilot bug bounty programme.

BENEFITS

Seamless integration in agile development model

In the agile development cycle, the bug bounty program offers SNF the decisive advantage that it can be implemented quickly and enables continuous, cost-efficient security checks.

Improved security coverage through diversity

The bug bounty program has delivered insights that the SNSF would not have obtained through conventional testing. The diversity of perspectives of the ethical hackers makes the coverage much broader.

Better understanding of attack patterns

Analyzing the log files, even if they do not reveal any direct vulnerabilities, helps to better understand attack patterns and improve the SNSF systems for alerting and log monitoring.

Industry: Public sector **Service:** GObugbounty