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Swiss Open Research Data Grants Track C: Contribute projects Application guidelines for proposals

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Introduction

On behalf of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), swissuniversities, the ETH Domain, the SNSF, and the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences developed the [Swiss National Strategy for Open Research Data \(ORD\)](#) and the associated [ORD Action Plan](#).

The ORD Action Plan comprises several action areas, the first of which – Action Area A – is designed to create and promote new discipline-specific and interdisciplinary open data communities while also fostering the leadership skills of Swiss researchers in these communities. Action Line A1.2 of Action Area A concerns grants for researchers and research communities that are awarded to advance the development of ORD practices; swissuniversities and the ETH Domain share primary ownership for this action line.

To implement Action Line A1.2, swissuniversities and the ETH Domain collaborated to develop the funding programme “[Swiss Open Research Data Grants](#)”, which invites researchers from all disciplines and from all types of higher education and research institutions to submit their project proposals. The objective is to fund projects that make tools available and therefore enabling, facilitating, and fostering the sharing of research data based on ORD principles and to assist researchers in becoming Open Science leaders in their field.

The programme is also designed to support researchers in engaging in or developing ORD practices with and for their communities. It is therefore a declared goal to fund projects that promote community building – including communities arising from interdisciplinary collaborations with shared ORD needs – and that look into ways to integrate a new ORD practice into existing infrastructures and international networks. Preference will be given to projects that engage in and are connected to a community.

The programme consists of three tracks, A, B, and C. The purpose of Track C and the relevant application guidelines are described in the following.

Please note that applications are processed either by swissuniversities or by the ETH Domain, depending on eligibility (for more information, please visit [our website](#)). Project proposals from [institutions eligible for federal project contributions](#) (in the following, PgB funding) taking the swissuniversities path are evaluated by the Open Science Reviewers’ Pool. The Delegation Open Science is the body responsible for final decisions on proposals. Applicants for project funding via swissuniversities must follow the application guidelines below.

Track C mission

Funding for “contribute projects” aims at:

- **Contributing** a piece of software, data, hardware, etc., which simplifies an established ORD practice, develops its research potential, or otherwise improves it.
- **Curating** or otherwise improving available ORD. For example, by updating existing data to adapt it to the evolution of ORD practices, by linking different ORD datasets, or by collecting and curating existing data before uploading it to an ORD platform.
- **Providing community services**, such as the organisation of a workshop or training, or coordination for the development of an ORD standard.

General terms and conditions

Applicant

Proposals must be submitted by one applicant (for Track C: Consortia with multiple applicants are not permitted). The applicant’s institution must be [eligible for funding through the federal project contributions programme \(PgB\)](#).

Signature

Before they submit their project proposal, applicants must have received explicit approval from a person with sufficient decision-making authority at their higher education institution.

By approving an application, the institution commits to providing the necessary matching fundings if a proposal is accepted. If the project is approved for funding, a grant agreement is concluded between swissuniversities and the eligible higher education institution and must then be signed by the rector/president/director of the institution.

Budget and project duration

The overall budget must not exceed CHF 100,000. This is the total cost of the project (including matching funds). The project duration may be up to 12 months, but the project must be completed by 31 December 2024.

Funding

If approved, projects receive up to 50 percent co-funding from swissuniversities according to PgB rules. In particular, the matching funds principle must be upheld: eligible higher education institutions are required to provide at least 50 percent of the overall funding from their own resources for the duration of the project. Please refer to the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities for more details on funding ([German](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)).

Budgeting guidelines and eligible costs

Budgets must include all project costs: federal contributions, institutional contributions (cash and in kind), and other contributions. Please consult the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)) for details on budgeting requirements, funding, and regulations for PgB contributions and the corresponding institutional contributions.

How to apply

Applicants must submit the completed [PDF-Proposal Form](#) to: open-science@swissuniversities.ch. The subject line of the email is as follows: "CHORD – Track C Proposal:" and the proposal's short title. The proposal should be written in English due to the international composition of the expert pool.

The submission **deadline for the second call is 19 July 2023**. Only applications that comply with all the guidelines will be considered.

Please note that a maximum of 60 proposals can be included in the evaluation process of this first call. Should more than 60 proposals be submitted, a random draw will be used to decide which proposals will be evaluated.

Evaluation procedure and criteria

Each application will be evaluated by a group of external reviewers on the basis of the project's excellence, impact potential, and implementation. The following are the guiding questions for the evaluation:

Excellence of ORD practice

- To what extent will the planned project substantially advance an ORD practice in the respective community, solve or take a crucial step towards solving a critical problem (thus facilitating progress) in the targeted field?

- How well are already existing ORD best practices (e.g. FAIR principles) considered in the proposal?
- How well does or could the project integrate with existing ORD services and infrastructures?

Impact on community

- To what extent will an existing or a newly formed community (be able to) engage with the ORD practice(s) built-up during the project?
- What will be the field-specific extent of the built-up ORD practice(s) in the intended community/communities?
- In what ways and to what degree will the new ORD practice(s) contribute to the targeted research goals and visions within the research community/communities?

Implementation – weight

- To what extent are the proposed measures and working arrangements appropriate for achieving the goals of the project?
- To what extent has the proposal justified the time frame and necessary resources?
- How sustainable is the proposed project? For example, do the applicants lay out how they could collaborate with existing ORD service and infrastructure providers to ensure the long-term success of the ORD practice(s) if adopted?

All reviewers are vetted; in the case of a conflict of interest, they will be excluded from the reviewing process.

Decision and project start

The final decision is taken by the Delegation Open Science, upon consultation of the reviewers' recommendations. The decision is scheduled for October 2023, approved projects can start on 1 January 2024 at the earliest. Please note that projects must be completed by 31 December 2024.

Reporting

The grantee must comply with the following reporting duties:

1. Final content report form
2. Final financial report form

The Delegation Open Science reserves the right to redefine financial contributions.

Please refer to the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)) for further information about the reporting duties.

Open science

Grantees must ensure open access to scientific publications (self-archiving or open access publishing) and to all the project's deliveries.

Ethical and legal compliance

Applicants bear the main responsibility for the project. In particular, they must consider all ethical, legal, and societal aspects surrounding the proposed project. If awarded a grant, they must comply with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to these matters.