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## **Programme Open Science I, Phase B – ORD 2022–2024 Call for proposals B5.3: Establishment of a network for data stewardship**

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### **1. Context**

#### **1.1 Open Research Data Strategy and Action Plan**

In January 2020, the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) charged swissuniversities with drafting a [Swiss National Strategy for Open Research Data](#) and an associated action plan. The [Action Plan for Open Research Data](#), published in January 2022, details the measures of the ORD Strategy (2021); the Action Plan was developed jointly by swissuniversities, the ETH Domain, the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences.

The Open Science Delegation manages the Open Science I, Phase B – ORD programme on behalf of the Board of swissuniversities. The programme implements all action lines of the

ORD Action Plan that fall under the responsibility of swissuniversities; this work is financed through federal project contributions (PgB).

### 1.2 Measure B5 of the ORD Action Plan: Professionalisation of ORD specialists and related services

Measure B5 of the ORD Action Plan is designed to promote professionalism in ORD specialists as well as the professionalisation of related services; in a first step lasting until the end of 2024, the focus is placed on data stewardship. Data stewardship involves the management and monitoring of an organisation's data with the aim of providing access to research data. As such, it is the link between researchers and support units in the form of IT, libraries, and infrastructure providers. Data stewards take on an active advisory role for researchers and serve as the first point of contact for all questions regarding (open) research data, e.g. regarding data backup, long-term preservation or data management.

Specific action lines of measure B5 will be continued in the 2025–2028 period and; in a second step, address not only data stewards but also ORD specialists in a broader sense.<sup>1</sup> This is the case, for example, for Action Line B5.2 Action Plans on Data Stewardship, for which a call was issued in July 2022, with the final decision on project approval taken by the Open Science Delegation in December 2022.

## **2. Call for proposals B5.3: Network for data stewardship**

As a further step towards promoting data stewardship, interested higher education institutions may submit a project proposal for establishing a network for data stewardship in the Swiss higher education landscape as part of the implementation of action line B5.3.

### 2.1 Goals

The aim of the project is to build a network for data stewardship.

The network must comply with the following requirements:

- Proactively establish and promote inter-institutional exchange (community of practice) on the topic of data stewardship
- Initiate collaborations within the network as well as with other relevant actors in the field of data stewardship outside the network
- Address the needs of different types of institutions, higher education institutions and research communities
- Build on existing internal and external structures of higher education institutions and work in the area of data stewardship
- Be available to institutions in the research and higher education landscape as a competent body of contact for questions regarding data stewardship
- Ensure medium and long-term international alignment

### 2.2 Selection procedure

Project proposals are evaluated by the swissuniversities Open Science Reviewers' Pool, and the decision-making body is the Delegation Open Science. It is expected that the Delegation Open Science will approve one project that coordinates cooperation between all interested

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to the necessary decisions by the governing bodies and organs of swissuniversities.

institutions. For this reason, the extent to which the project proposal adequately addresses and incorporates the needs of the different institutions, types of higher education institutions and research communities is given particular weight in the evaluation. Cooperation with other [Swiss higher education institutions eligible for funding](#) is therefore desirable.

In case of a positive decision on the application, the swissuniversities Open Science programme will support the project financially through federal project contributions (PgB) from the federal government. Applicants are expected to be informed of the decision on their application in November 2023.

### 2.3 Timetable

06 April 2023	The call for proposal is opened
<b>15 June 2023</b>	<b>Submission deadline</b>
June-August 2023	Evaluation of applications by the Open Science Reviewers' Pool
October 2023	Decision by the Delegation Open Science with subsequent announcement
<b>December 2023</b>	<b>Expected earliest possible project start</b>

### 2.4 Formal requirements

<b>Submission</b>	The <a href="#">application</a> and budget form ( <a href="#">individual institution</a> , <a href="#">multiple institutions</a> ) must be sent with the subject "Action line B5.3: <i>Title of project proposal</i> " to the following address: <a href="mailto:open-science@swissuniversities.ch">open-science@swissuniversities.ch</a> Deadline for submissions is 15 June 2023
<b>Signature</b>	The application must be signed by the president or rector of all participating higher education institutions
<b>Project duration</b>	The earliest project start is expected to be in December 2023, projects must be concluded by the end of 2024 at the latest
<b>Budget</b>	Up to CHF 240,000 in federal funding

### 2.5 Content requirements

Project proposals for the data stewardship network are assessed by external reviewers of the Open Science Reviewers' Pool and must meet the following requirements:

- (1) Align with the explanations on action line B5.3 of the [National ORD Action Plan](#) (pp. 24–25)
- (2) Fulfil the requirements for the establishment of a nationwide network for data stewardship as listed under point 2 of this document: Call for proposals B5.3 network for data stewardship
- (3) Verify the existence of realistic project planning
- (4) Contain detailed financial planning for the annual costs up to the end of 2024
- (5) Specify the strategic and financial sustainability of the data stewardship network and its further implementation after 2024 in accordance with the described objectives

### **3. Regulations for federal project contributions (PgB)**

#### **3.1 Matching funds principle**

Subject to the budgetary decision of the Federal Assembly, federal funds are allocated by the State Secretariat for Education, Research, and Innovation (SERI) and awarded to the higher education institutions via swissuniversities; the regulations for federal project contributions (PgB) therefore apply. In particular, this includes the matching funds principle: the higher education institutions are required to cover at least 50 percent of the total project costs from their own resources. More information is available in the Guidelines for the PgB-funded programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)).

#### **3.2 Reporting**

The project leaders must submit to swissuniversities an annual as well as a final content and financial report. Detailed information on reporting can be found in the Guidelines for the PgB-funded programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)).

### **4. Contact**

In case of questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Katja Fiechter, policy officer in the division Higher Education Policy:

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