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**Swiss Open Research Data Grants
Track B: Establish 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 proposals that develop and implement tools 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 B 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) managed by swissuniversities 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 B mission

The purpose of Track B is to fund projects that are fostering research practices and tools – including for example software, protocols, standards, benchmarks, documentation and training materials, networking, educational facilities, and resources – to enable, facilitate, and promote the sharing of research data based on ORD principles. Preference will be given to projects that involve and are connected to one or more communities. For this reason, the proposals are expected to demonstrate the ways in which ORD practice promotes good research in a specific field. These projects should pave the way for researchers to become highly innovative Open Science leaders of research communities that have exceptional scientific impact on the Swiss research landscape.

Track B aims at fully establishing promising ORD practices once their scientific value has been demonstrated and they have attracted sizable, ideally international communities. A major goal concerns bringing the ORD infrastructure, community management, and scientific vision to the next level in addition to further growing the community involved. The focus of Track B projects is therefore placed on ORD practices, not on services and infrastructure (S&I) they rely on. While some specific work on S&I may be necessary to further develop an ORD practice, projects that concentrate solely on developing new S&I or expanding existing S&I without a clear outreach to at least one specific research community are outside the scope of this track.

General terms and conditions

Applicants and consortiums

Proposals may be submitted by one applicant or by a consortium of applicants. The applicants' institution [must be eligible for funding through the federal project contributions programme](#) (PgB programme). Please read the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#)).

There are no restrictions on what constitutes a consortium. They may be composed of applicants from one or several institutions, with no restrictions on the number of applicants from the same institution. A consortium must designate a “lead applicant” to represent all other co-applicants. Infrastructure or service providers may be part of the consortium but are ruled out as lead applicants. For information about collaborations with non-eligible partner institutions, please see section 3.1 of the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#)).

Please note that applicants must have received explicit approval from their higher education institution before they submit their project proposal. This is because the grant agreement is concluded between swissuniversities and the eligible higher education institution: by approving an application, the institution commits to providing the necessary matching funds if the proposal is accepted.

Please note: only proposals for which a Track B pre-proposal was submitted by 1 July 2022 will be considered.

Budget and project duration

The overall budget must not exceed CHF 1,500,000. This is the total cost of the project (including matching funds). The project duration may be up to 24 months, but the project must be completed by 31 December 2024.

Funding

If approved, projects receive up to 50 percent co-funding from swissuniversities in accordance with 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 entire 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](#)).

Track B is designed to provide targeted funding for exploring an ORD practice. Costs for adjacent research – such as costs for data production/collection and analysis, research software/hardware development – are not a standard part of Track B. Therefore, costs for operating ORD platforms may be included in the budget only if a platform is being newly developed in the scope of the project and only for the duration of the project.

Budgeting guidelines and eligible costs

Budgets must include all project funds: federal contributions, institutional contributions (cash and in kind), and other contributions. In the case of a consortium spanning multiple institutions, the budget must detail which funds are allocated to which institution. Please refer to the corresponding budget forms listed below under “Required documents”.

Please consult the Guidelines for the 2021–2024 PgB programmes managed by swissuniversities ([German](#) | [French](#)) for details on budgeting requirements, funding, and regulations for PgB contributions and the corresponding institutional contributions.

How to apply

Applicants must submit their proposals (as a PDF *and* Word document) to: open-science@swissuniversities.ch. The subject line of the email is as follows: “CHORD - Track B Full Proposal”: and the proposal’s title. All required documents (below) should be written in English due to the international composition of the expert pool.

The submission **deadline for the call is 1 September 2022 (5:00 pm CEST)**.

Required documents

Two forms must be completed and submitted:

1. [Proposal form](#)
2. Project budget form
 - a. [Budget form PgB Individual Project](#) *or*
 - b. [Budget form PgB Multiple Projects](#)

Only applications that comply with all the guidelines will be considered. If applicable, a DMP must be submitted once the project has been accepted.

Evaluation procedure and criteria

Applicants are advised to incorporate the feedback received on their pre-proposals. For the second phase of the procedure, each full proposal will be evaluated and scored by two external reviewers on the basis of the project’s excellence, impact potential, and implementation. The following questions serve as guidelines for the evaluation:

Excellence of ORD practice – weight = 0.3

- To what extent will the planned project substantially advance the field of Open Research Data, or solve – or take a crucial step towards solving – a critical problem and thus facilitate progress in the field?
- To what extent does the project require an interdisciplinary and/or collaborative approach that involves significant synergies, complementarities, or scientific added value on its pathway to achieving its objectives?
- To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. establishing an ORD practice)?
- How well are ORD best practices (e.g. FAIR principles) considered?
- How well does the project integrate with existing ORD services and infrastructures and/or international networks?

Implementation – weight = 0.3

- To what extent is the project feasible, bearing in mind that establishing ORD practices in the specific research field is the aim?
- 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?
- To what extent is the planned project collaborative, going beyond what the individual institutions could achieve alone?
- How sustainable is the proposed project? Do the applicants lay out how they plan to collaborate with existing ORD service and infrastructure providers to ensure the long-term success of the yet-to-be-established ORD practice?
- Are potentially associated risks named and adequately addressed?

Impact on community – weight 0.4

- To what extent is the proposed project expected to establish ORD practices in the specific research field/domain?
- To what extent will the proposed ORD practice lead to new avenues between and/or across institutions?

Please note that 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 December 2022, and approved projects are expected to begin in January 2023.

Reporting

The grantee must comply with the following reporting duties:

1. Annual content report form for project (per calendar year)
2. Annual financial report form for project (per calendar year)
3. Final content report form for project
4. Final financial report form for project

Please note that for all approved projects, a midterm and final review are required. The project leaders, key collaborators, and partners as well as the General Secretariat of swissuniversities and representatives of the Open Science Reviewers' Pool are involved. The Open Science Delegation is informed about the results of the reviews.

The Delegation Open Science reserves the right to redefine financial contributions on the basis of the reports and reviews.

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

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.

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