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Programme Open Science II

Application guidelines for the call for proposals to mobilise and facilitate participation in relevant international initiatives

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1. Context

1.1 OA-Strategy, ORD-Strategy, and the PgB Open Science II

The [programme Open Science II](#) is a national funding programme entrusted to swissuniversities, the Swiss Rectors' Conference, for implementation as part of the federal government's federal project contributions in accordance with the HEdA. The [Delegation Open Science](#) manages the programme Open Science II on behalf of the Board of swissuniversities.

In the context of the programme Open Science II, and based in particular on the [National Strategy for Open Research Data](#) and the [National Open Access Strategy](#), swissuniversities supports measures to mobilise and facilitate participation in relevant international initiatives.

1.2 Mobilise and facilitate participation in relevant international initiatives

International collaboration is of utmost importance for maintaining excellence in the Swiss ERI sector. Interconnectedness, interoperability, and representation of the Swiss research landscape in European and global initiatives are key to ensuring that Swiss higher education and

research institutions remain at the forefront. The two national strategies are therefore embedded in the international context, with European and global partners regarded as vital to their success. For this reason, interacting with and linking Swiss efforts to international policies and initiatives in the area of open science is crucial for achieving the strategies' objectives.

1.3 Federal spending cuts: Limitation to 2026

On 20 September 2024, the Federal Council [announced](#) which cost-cutting measures suggested in the [report](#) of the 'Spending and Subsidy Review' expert group are to be pursued further. These measures include the discontinuation of federal project contributions. swissuniversities has been informed that for now, financial resources for the 2025–2028 programmes can only be committed for the years 2025 and 2026. Projects may use funding until the end of January 2027.

2. Call for project proposals to mobilise and facilitate participation in relevant international initiatives

In order to enable higher education institutions to participate in relevant European and international initiatives related to Open Science, swissuniversities' PgB programme Open Science II welcomes proposals for project funding from [eligible higher education institutions](#) on a rolling basis.

2.1 Goals

The goal of this call is to support the sustainable integration and participation of Swiss higher education institutions, research communities, and research groups in relevant European and international Open Science initiatives and (infra)structures, such as [EOSC](#), the [European Diamond Capacity Hub](#), [Plan S](#), [OPERAS](#) or the [Research Data Alliance](#).¹ Projects may fulfil one or more of the following objectives:

- Develop entrance solutions for Swiss higher education institutions to international Open Science initiatives and (infra)structures.²
- Ensure connectivity to and integration in international Open Science initiatives and (infra)structures
- Ensure adequate representation and integration of Swiss institutions, researchers, and service providers in international initiatives and forums,³ including disciplinary and community-specific settings.
- Participate in working groups to develop common international standards and policies.
- Membership fees for the participation in international initiatives.
- Organisation of promotional activities (e.g. workshops) to establish international initiatives in Switzerland and facilitate participation of the Swiss research community.
- Pilot and implement international solutions, recommendations, or good practices in an institutional context.

It is strongly encouraged that proposals promote or coordinate collaboration between institutions.

¹ Participation in other initiatives, including initiatives already supported by the federal government is also possible, provided that no double funding occurs. For questions regarding the relevance of an initiative, please contact open-science@swissuniversities.ch.

² Funding will only be provided for the development of entrance solutions to, connectivity to, and integration in (infra)structures; not for the development of infrastructures themselves.

³ Please note: A proposed project must go beyond mere participation in an international conference.

2.2 Requirements

Submission	<p>The following documents must be sent to open-science@swissuniversities.ch with the subject line "International Initiative Funding: Title of proposal":</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Application form (as PDF and Word) 2) Budget form for individual projects or budget form for co-operation projects (as Excel) <p>Proposals may be submitted by one applicant (individual projects) or by a consortium of applicants (cooperation projects).</p> <p>Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis and will be considered at the meetings of the Delegation Open Science (December 2025, March 2026, June 2026). The respective deadlines for submission are: 31 October 2025, 31 January 2026, and 30 April 2026.</p>
Signature	<p>The application must be signed by the president or rector of all participating higher education institutions. All signatures must be either digital, with a Qualified Electronic Signature (QES), or handwritten. By signing an application, the institution commits to providing the necessary matching funds if a proposal is accepted.</p>
Project duration	<p>Projects must be concluded by 31 January 2027 at the latest.</p>
Budget	<p>Up to CHF 250'000 in federal funding for the entire action line. A minimum amount of CHF 10'000 in federal funds per project is expected. If more federal funds are requested than available by the time of a DeLOS meeting, the DeLOS reserves the right to award only a portion of the requested funds per project.</p>
General alignment	<p>Project proposals must be in line with the principles of the National ORD Strategy and ORD Action Plan, in particular the FAIR principles, the revised National OA Strategy, and the swissuniversities Checklist Diversity Mainstreaming (German French).</p>

2.3 Selection procedure

Proposals are evaluated on a rolling basis until the available funds are exhausted. When the amount of requested funding reaches the amount budgeted, a notice will appear on the website. If funds become available again at a later date, the call will be reactivated.

The General Secretariat of swissuniversities evaluates the project proposals (cf. [Implementation Plan](#)). The proposals are then submitted to the Delegation Open Science, the decision-making body, for approval at the quarterly meeting.

Collaboration with other Swiss higher education institutions eligible for funding is desirable. The extent to which a proposal adequately addresses and incorporates the needs of different institutions, types of higher education institutions, and research communities is therefore given particular weight in the evaluation.

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. Further information and contact

For further information please see the [website of the PgB Open Science II](#) or send an email to: open-science@swissuniversities.ch.