

History of SSHOC-CH

How it started?

SSHOC-CH builds on the **SSH RIs in Switzerland** initiative, which started in spring 2022, with the creation of a coordination group consisting of the directors of national research infrastructures (RIs) in the SSH, the national coordinators of international SSH RIs with Swiss participation (CESSDA, CLARIN, DARIAH, ESS, SHARE, GGP) and the representatives of the Swiss Academy for the SSH.

What steps were taken?

The coordination group started a reflexion in order gather the SSH community around common interests with respect to access to RIs. This was done through a series of events and a position paper, as follows:

The first event, which took place on Mai 31, 2022, gathered several stakeholders - researchers, representatives of academic and research institutions, the SNSF, SERI and Euresearch, around the **needs of the Swiss SSH community**.



□ Go to the meeting slides



The **Position Paper** was written in spring 2022 and was open to consultation. The final version, dissemination in Swiss the SSH community, collected more than 140 support signatures. The Position Paper and the list of signatures were sent in August 2022 to the State Secretary, the president of swissuniversities, the president of the SNSF Research Council, the SNSF Director and to the rectors of all Swiss higher education institutions.

□ Read the position paper

The **second event**, which took place on 18 January 2023, had the theme **Paving the way for the future**. It aimed at learning about concrete infrastructure proposals and exchanging on how we can coordinate within the Swiss SSH community to create synergies between different concrete projects. Concretely, this meeting had **three main objectives**:

1. **Raise awareness on the importance of research infrastructure** in the SSH domain and how prioritisation and funding works (national and ESFRI roadmap process)
2. **Share experiences from other countries** and the European level on how collaborations between projects and infrastructures work
3. **Give a platform to potential new Swiss RIs in the SSH domain** in order to reflect on needs of the SSH community and how to create synergies and join forces

To reach these objectives, we welcomed four invited speakers from abroad, who shared their experience of how collaboration and clustering happened successfully in other countries and at the European level. In addition, the floor was given to several Swiss projects of RIs in the SSH field with the aim to reflect on user needs and possible synergies. The day ended with a Round Table with an open discussion, in which invited guests from the SNSF, the SERI, swissuniversities, the SAGW and all members of the audience will have the opportunity to express themselves.

[□ Have a look at the](#)

[, Franciska de Jong's](#) programme
[, Matej Ďurčo's](#) slides
[and Tom Emery's](#) slides

Following the example of the European [SSHOC project](#) (2019-2022) and of the [Dutch SSHOC-NL project](#), the idea of **moving towards a SSHOC-CH national organisation** was put forward. SSHOC-CH is aimed as a national collaboration between social sciences and humanities in order to implement a SSHOC-CH consortium of research infrastructures and of higher education institutions.



Such a SSHOC-CH organization is necessary in order to **facilitate the access of the SSH fields and its sub-fields to a satisfactory national ecosystem of services, data and tools** in the future years. Nevertheless, the success of such a national enterprise depends on the cooperation among the members of the Swiss SSH scientific and infrastructural community, as it was highlighted in the position paper and proved successful in the case of SSHOC-NL

[□ Read the project application](#)

With this vision, a **SSHOC-CH kick-off meeting** took place in autumn 2023 and gathered members from the scientific community, national RIs providing services for the Swiss SSH scientific community, and from the national nodes of European SSH RIs who were interested in supporting and getting involved in this project.



[□ Go to the meeting slides](#)

Following the meeting that took place in autumn 2023, where all stakeholders supported the creation of the SSHOC-CH Association, we take the necessary steps to move forward. **The SSHOC-CH Association is founded** with the occasion of a half-day workshop on the need and the future of infrastructures for the social sciences and humanities community in Switzerland (April 24, 2024).

Behind the disciplinary differences regarding data types, technologies, methodologies, and research questions, scholars from social sciences and



humanities face similar challenges when it comes to complying to **Open Science** requirements. Be it survey data, experimental data, digital editions, text data, multi-modal data, images, historical records, social media data, large language models, so on and so forth, infrastructure and expertise are required to create, process, analyze, store, and archive them.

In Switzerland, infrastructure and expertise are available in the so-called **national infrastructures such as FORS, SWISSUbase, DaSCH and LiRI**, but also local infrastructures and long-term projects such as Collection Builder, Fondue, Geovistory, nodegoat, Année politique Suisse, swiss vote, histHub, the four national dictionaries, dodis, metagrid, infoclio.ch and various digital editions, to name but a few.

However, there is a lack of active exchange between these infrastructures in order to develop joint, uncomplicated solutions for research and to catch up with European solutions. The Social Science & Humanities Open Cloud Switzerland (SSHOC-CH) is in the process of being established and it aims at **finding synergies and fostering collaborations between the social sciences and humanities**, and to building an ecosystem of national infrastructures and expertise which will support scholars from social sciences and humanities in their research and in managing their data in the spirit of Open Science and FAIR principles.



Contact

For more information about activities preceding the launch of SSHOC-CH, please write to [Cristina Grisot](#) or [Georg Lutz](#).

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