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Report on SSHOC-CH GA and its satellite event

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SSHOC-CH General Assembly

SSHOC-CH first GA and its **satellite event** successfully took place on April 11, 2025, in Bern.

The GA was chaired by Georg Lutz, director of FORS and president of SSHOC-CH. He noted the increasing visibility of SSHOC-CH in the research community and emphasized the progress made since its founding on April 24, 2024. Georg Lutz presented the 2024 Annual Report (read

here

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The association made significant progress, especially considering it was built from the ground up. A contract was signed with the Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Geschichte (SGG) to handle administrative tasks. A bank account was opened, a communication process was established, and two working groups were formed: Outreach & Communication, and Policy (composed of SSHOC-CH Board members). As for the Policy working group, a white paper was finalized to outline guiding principles, and a position paper was developed to participate in the national roadmap process. Although no concrete results emerged, the goal was to establish SSHOC-CH's presence and promote project ideas. An event on the national roadmap process was held successfully in December 2024, and approximately 5-6 projects from the SSH domain were submitted for the 2027 Roadmap selection process. On the communication front, the SSHOC-CH website was launched, featuring the members list and participating institutions. Social media presence was also initiated on LinkedIn and Bluesky.

The Board presented the work plan for 2025, highlighting the need for active member involvement. Priorities include exploring SSHOC-CH's integration into EOSC, following up on the national roadmap process and engaging with institutions on funding mechanisms, enhancing the website, publishing newsletters, and improving social media, increasing membership, establishing working groups to address key issues relevant for the SSHOC-CH community, and preparing for the development of an institutional membership model.

The SSHOC-CH Board proposed the election of Beat Immenhauser, Co-General Secretary of SAGW, to the SSHOC-CH Board for the 2025–2026 term. Beat Immenhauser accepted the nomination and expressed enthusiasm for contributing to SSHOC-CH and strengthening institutional liaison. The assembly approved the proposal unanimously without abstentions.

In the end, Georg Lutz reflected on the direction of SSHOC-CH. He acknowledged the difficulty of achieving coordination without dedicated resources, despite voluntary efforts. He emphasized that participation is open and encouraged all members to get involved to avoid duplication of work. SSHOC-CH is a pioneering initiative even within Europe.

SSHOC-CH satellite event

The **satellite event** welcomed two keynote presentations by Johannes Paulmann (NFDI4Memory consortium, Germany) and by Lucas van der Meer (ODISSEI and SSHOC-NL, Netherlands)

Johannes Paulmann, spokesperson for the NFDI4Memory consortium for historically working sciences as part of the development of a National Research Data Infrastructure. 4Memory represents not only the field of history as such but also other disciplines that make use of historical data as part of their methodologies, such as economic and social history, religious studies, and area studies. It aims to ensure the quality of historical research data, thereby safeguarding the critical role of the humanities in complex, rapidly changing societies. Johannes Paulmann explained the **bottom-up creation of the NFDI4Memory consortium** and how its main aim is to serve the needs of the scientific community.

Lucas van der Meer, Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at ODISSEI (Open Data Infrastructure for Social Science and Economic Innovations) and Co-CTO of SSHOC-NL (Netherlands). ODISSEI is the National Research Infrastructure for **Social Sciences** with diverse components, including access to data, expertise and computing, and offers a wide range of support opportunities. Its explicit aim is to unite the social sciences and create a common, national infrastructure for research. In 2024, ODISSEI started the SSHOC-NL collaboration with its counterpart in the **humanities** CLARIAH, which is the collaboration between CLARIN “Common Language Resources and Language Technology” and DARIAH “Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities”. Lucas van der Meer explained the **top-down creation of SSHOC-NL**, its governance and its internal organisation allowing the autonomy of ODISSEI on one hand and of CLARIAH on the other hand, and insisted on the importance of collaboration above all.

The keynote talks were followed by a panel discussion about ***Leveraging existing synergies for the SSH: perspectives from Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands***

With the participation of:

- Johannes Paulmann (NFDI4Memory)
- Lucas van der Meer (ODISSEI, SSHOC-NL)
- Beat Immenhauser (Swiss Academy for Human and Social Sciences SAGW)
- Rudolf Mumenthaler (UZH Library, member of StraCo SSH Taskforce)
- Stéphanie Steinmetz (UNIL, member of SSHOC-CH Policy WG)
- Elena Chestnova (USI, member of SSHOC-CH Policy WG)

Moderated by Cristina Grisot (CLARIN-CH and DARIAH-CH, vice-chair of SSHOC-CH), the discussion was lively and challenging. Panelists were invited to discuss about the funding situation of research infrastructures in Switzerland, the role of the Academy for Social and Human Sciences in the current prioritization and funding of RIs in the SSH, the role of university libraries when it comes to providing national infrastructures for the SSH, and the case of digital editions which is a large field in the humanities and which does not have a dedicated national infrastructure, among others.

Report made by Cristina Grisot and Emilie Paola de Morgan

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