

What future for Social Sciences and Humanities research infrastructures in Switzerland?

Publication Date: 2025-05-21

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The question of the future of Social Sciences and Humanities research infrastructures in Switzerland has become more and more preoccupying for infrastructure professionals, for researchers and for policy makers.

Three notable initiatives have analysed the landscape, published position papers and reports in which they discuss the results of their analyses and formulate recommendations.

- The Swiss National Open Research Data Strategy Council (StraCo) mandated the Task Force for Social Sciences and Humanities (TF SSH) to analyze Cluster 2 within Switzerland's Open Research Data (ORD) ecosystem. The report published on April 23, 2025, provides the analytical, factual foundation for a strategic push to improve coordination, sustainability, and alignment of SSH research data infrastructures (RDIs). The report finds that social sciences and humanities are critical to addressing societal challenges such as digital transformation, cultural preservation, and evidence-based policymaking. Despite considerable progress, SSH RDIs often face fragmented governance, short-term funding models, and data access and reuse barriers. The report aims to map existing SSH RDIs and services and identify gaps, redundancies, and opportunities for coordination. Download and read the report [here](#).
- The directors of the two national research infrastructures for the SSH - the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences FORS and the Swiss National Data and Service Center for the Humanities DaSCH - joined their force to make an analysis of the policy, funding and governance framework for Swiss SSH research infrastructures. The papers highlights that Switzerland's research infrastructure landscape suffers from inconsistent funding, governance, and monitoring models. A unified legal framework and a national coordinating body are proposed to ensure transparency, standardization, and sustainability. Joint funding, inclusive access, and coordinated monitoring would improve efficiency and support Switzerland's global research competitiveness. Download and read the report [here](#).
- The Swiss SSH Open Cluster SSHOC-CH was founded on April 24, 2024, with the mission to create a cluster of social science and humanities research infrastructures in Switzerland, encompassing both national infrastructures and the national nodes of international infrastructures. The goal is to ensure the exchange and cooperation of research infrastructures to support research projects and researchers, identify and foster synergies, and, where

possible, develop joint platforms and services or enhance the interoperability of existing ones. To lay the bases of SSHOC-CH, members of the its Board publish a first position paper on August 24, 2022, and then a white paper on April 24, 2024. Both papers raise awareness and stimulate a discussion on the situation of social sciences and humanities research infrastructures in Switzerland, the Swiss roadmap process, and possible improvements of the way in which projects for research infrastructures are funded. Download and read the position paper [here](#). Download and read the white paper [here](#).

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