

Call for End-User Innovation Projects

Since 2024, the Swiss Data Science Center welcomes proposals for End-User Innovation collaborations. This document describes the modalities of collaboration with the SDSC in these collaborations. Please note that information and conditions applicable to all National calls of the SDSC such as **Project duration, Eligibility criteria, Resources granted, Domains and tracks** are described in the **General Documentation of the Second National Calls**.

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Objectives of the Call for End-User Innovation

The objective of the call for End-User Innovation collaborations is to ensure that novelty developed in an academic context fulfills its potential in production/end-user contexts.

Examples of such collaborations include those aimed at:

- The **industrialization of research prototypes** in the form of data products or licensable software with clear market potential;
- The **adoption of data science solutions** designed by academic/research organizations **by public sector entities** such as cantonal administrations or federal offices, benefitting their end-users;
- The **translation** of machine learning models created in specific domains (e.g. clinical research) into robust applications benefitting specific end-users (e.g. practitioners and their patients).

Why should you partner with us?

SDSC offers its partners a unique advantage in Switzerland: its strategic and operational know-how resulting from supporting 50+ companies/public sector entities/NGOs over multiple years to achieve impact in data science. Concretely, the SDSC can provide:

- **Validation** of partners' research findings and innovation prototypes in a productive environment: thanks to the extensive experience in multiple industrial domains and to the rich skillset of its innovation team, the SDSC can support partners in ensuring that their solutions achieve their intended impact.
- **Pathways to adoption & market:** thanks to its long-standing collaborations with a broad network of industrial, public sector and not-for-profit organizations in Switzerland, the SDSC can support partners in the industrialization and marketability of their innovation.

Key information

Proposals are especially welcome in (but not limited to) the following domains:

1. **Energy and sustainability:** sustainable manufacturing, energy forecasting and optimization, sustainable environments and mobility
2. **Health & biomedical:** biomedical data science, drug discovery and development, collaborative frameworks for patient welfare
3. **Digital Society:** enablement of public administration for better serving Swiss-based population; public/social service and humanitarian-focused organizations.

Beneficiaries

The primary intended **beneficiaries** of the present call include but are not limited to research organizations, public/para-public sector and not-for-profit organizations. Private companies can participate as joining implementation partners and benefit from first-mover advantage.

Eligibility criteria

To apply for an end-user innovation project, the applicants must meet the following eligibility conditions:

- They have the relevant qualifications to contribute to the proposed project.
- They are employed at least for the duration of the project at the institution they are affiliated with or they have been given assurance of such employment in writing;
- The necessary resources are at their disposal to contribute appropriately to the proposed project.

Eligible institutions

The main applicant must be affiliated with:

- One of the recognized Swiss higher education research centers pursuant to [Art. 4c RIPA](#):
 - The two Federal Institutes of Technology and Research Institutes within the Federal Institutes of Technology Domain,
 - Higher Education Institutions and other institutions that are accredited under the HEdA ([list of accredited institutions](#)),
 - Research facilities of national importance (Art. 15 RIPA) ([list of facilities](#)).
 - Swiss national nodes of internationally coordinated research infrastructure networks ([list of national nodes](#))
- Swiss cantonal or federal administration
- Swiss NGOs or international NGOs with a strong presence in Switzerland.

Private companies can participate as joining implementation partners and benefit from first-mover advantage.

If unsure about your institution's eligibility, please contact us for clarification.

Formats

We accept two proposal formats: **Collaborative projects** and **Expert support mandates**.

Collaborative Projects

The primary purpose of a collaborative project is to benefit from the complementarity of applicant partners and SDSC staff to deliver concrete and impactful solutions in line with the objectives above. Collaborative projects represent the primary instrument of the SDSC Innovation call.

Contribution by the SDSC

The Innovation call will fund several collaborative projects per year, lasting 12 months.

Each funded project is entitled to an in-kind contribution, as follows:

- SDSC: At least 0.5 FTE, specific nature of contribution to be defined based on the nature of the project (data scientist/applied AI engineer, data engineer, MLOps specialist, ...).

- In particular, the SDSC will ensure an appropriate ratio of project management and business analysis to guarantee the impact/value creation of the proposed solution.
- Compute/storage as evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Submission format and evaluation process

The proposal process for collaborative projects will consist of the following steps:

1. Pre-proposal phase

- Goal: provide key information to qualify for invitation to submit full proposal;
- Evaluated by experts chosen from a panel including:
 - ◆ 5 experts from the Swiss Data Science Center
 - ◆ 3 experts selected from third-party research organizations and members of private & public sector
- Submission format:
 - ◆ Max 3 pages based on a fixed template (executive summary, info on applicants, rationale & methodology, ability to deliver, references).

2. Full proposal phase

- Goal: substantiate proposed innovation with facts & plans;
- Evaluated by experts chosen from a panel including:
 - ◆ 5 experts selected from third-party research organizations and members of private & public sector
- Submission format:
 - ◆ Max 10 pages based on a fixed template (executive summary, introduction, project plan, resources, references).

Between the pre-proposal and proposal phases, an **audition** phase may be proposed with the following format:

- Presentation for a total duration of up to 30' including a 5' «pitch» and a 20' Q/A session

Success criteria

Successful proposals will be selected based on the three following aspects:

1. Innovation degree and methodology
2. Expected impact and capability to deliver
3. Prior projects and «track record»

Important dates

- Submission of pre-proposals — 27th October 2025
- Invitation to submit full proposals — 1st December 2025
- Submission of full proposals — 31st January 2026
- Final decision on full proposals — 30th April 2026
- Start of projects — June 2026

Expert Support Mandates

The primary purpose of an expert support mandate is for the applicant to benefit from the strategic and operational expertise of SDSC staff to acquire maturity and confidence in view of concrete data science initiatives.

Contribution by the SDSC

The Innovation call will fund several expert support mandates per year, each lasting 12 months.

- Each mandate consists of an in-kind contribution in the form of dedicated strategic and operational expertise delivered by senior SDSC members
- The contribution is comparable to that of an SDSC Premium Membership

Submission format and evaluation process

The proposal process for expert support mandates will consist of the following steps:

- **Application:**
 - Max 3 pages based on a fixed template (executive summary, info on applicant, expected outcome, references)
 - Evaluated by experts chosen from a panel including:
 - 3 experts from the Swiss Data Science Center
 - 3 experts selected from third-party research organizations and members of private & public sector
- **Audition:**
 - Presentation for a total duration of up to 30' including a 5' "pitch" and a 20' Q/A session

Success criteria

Successful proposals will be selected based on the following aspects:

1. Relevance and dimension of the applicant organization within its domain
2. Expected impact
3. Prior «track record» and outlook

Important dates

- Submission of applications — 27th October 2025
- Final decision on applications — 1st December 2025
- Start of mandates — Q2 2025

Contact

For questions on this call, please contact Innovation-call@datascience.ch