

ETH Domain ORD Program

Measure 1: field-specific actions

Track C: Contribute projects

Application guidelines

Introduction

The overall aim of this first measure of the ETH-Domain's Open Research Data (ORD) Program is to support researchers engaging in or developing **ORD practices** (<https://ethrat.ch/de/eth-bereich/open-research-data/>) with and for their community(-ies) and to assist these researchers in becoming Open Science leaders in their field(s).

It is the declared goal to fund proposals that make available tools (software; hardware; protocols; standards; benchmarks; documentation and training materials; networking and education events; activities; and resources), which enable, facilitate and foster sharing research data based on ORD principles. Preference will be given to projects which engage and are connected to a community. Therefore, applicants are strongly invited to demonstrate why their project represents an ORD practice that encourages good research in their field.

Track C mission

Funding for “contribute projects” aims at:

- **Contributing** a piece of software, data, hardware, etc., which simplifies an established ORD practice, develops its research potential, or otherwise improves it.
- **Curating** or otherwise improving available ORD, for example, by updating existing data to adapt it to the evolution of ORD practices or by linking different ORD datasets or by collecting and curating existing data before uploading it to an ORD platform.
- **Providing community services**, such as the organization of a workshop or training, or coordination for the development of an ORD standard.

General terms and conditions

Applicants and Consortiums

Proposals must be submitted by one applicant¹.

The same project can only be submitted for funding within a maximum of three different Contribute calls, even if it has been amended and/or improved. Should the same project (or an amended/improved version) be submitted for a 4th time under a Contribute call, it will be deemed ineligible, even if submitted by another applicant (e.g. someone else from the same lab).

Applicants must be employed by an ETH Domain institution (ETHZ, EPFL, PSI, Empa, EAWAG, WSL) for the duration of the project. Please verify your institution's guidelines, as they may define additional eligibility requirements.

Budget and Duration

The duration of projects can be up to 12 months, with no possibility of extension. The applicant must start working on the project within 6 months of its approval.

The overall budget must be CHF 30'000. This is the total cost of the project (including in-kind contributions), **not** the amount of funding the applicants will receive.

Funding

Proposals receive 50% co-funding from the ETH Board (matching funds principle). The remaining budget must be provided by in-cash or in-kind resources from within the institution of the applicants.

Applicants affiliated with Research Institutes (RIs) must provide a co-funding confirmation letter from their institutions (see the "Required documents" section below). This does not apply to EPFL- and ETHZ-affiliated applicants. Please verify your institution's guidelines for details.

Budgeting Guidelines and Eligible Costs

Budgets must include all project costs, including those expected to be covered in-kind or in-cash.

Only costs specific to contributing to an ORD practice can be included in the budget. Adjacent research costs are not allowed, including costs for data production/collection and analysis, for research software/hardware development, etc. Operational costs of ORD platforms are excluded.

Costs, that are already funded by a third party, are not eligible for funding and do not qualify as in-kind or in-cash contributions.

Please verify your institution's guidelines for detailed guidance regarding budgeting requirements, funding and regulations for in-kind or in-cash contributions.

Institution guidelines

Links to institutions-specific guidelines:

Instit.	Link to document
ETHZ	https://ethrat.ch/en/information-for-ethz-and-epfl-applicants
EPFL	https://ethrat.ch/en/information-for-ethz-and-epfl-applicants
PSI	https://Intranet.psi.ch/en/ord
Empa	https://www.empa.ch/group/empa/intranet

¹ The term "principal investigator" (PI) is avoided since the scheme is not intended to support research (investigation).

WSL	https://intra.wsl.ch/de/direktion/calls-der-direktion/open-research-data-practices
EAWAG	https://www.internal.eawag.ch/de/rechtsgrundlagen/weisungen-interne-regelungen/weisungen/2022/23-07/

How to apply

All the required documents (see table below) must be written in English and must be submitted via the [online submission platform](#) **before the submission deadline of 12 December 2023 (17:00 CET)**, concerning this sixth call. The submission deadline for a following, seventh call will be announced later. It is foreseen to have eight Contribute calls for proposals in total.

Required documents

Research proposal	This template must be used. It can be downloaded from the online submission platform.
Confirmation by the ETH Domain institution(s) concerning the co-funding	For the four RIs only. Please follow the institutional guidelines. It should be then officially signed by the institution's representative for the ORD program.
Letter(s) of support by the Lab/Group/Research Unit's head (if applicable)	See the "Institution guidelines" section above
CV (including major scientific achievements)	Applicants must submit their CV and Major Scientific Achievements according to SNSF guidelines. CVs in other formats will not be accepted. SNSF guidelines .
Ethical issues questionnaire	The applicant will be required to fill out an ethical issues questionnaire via the applicant portal.

Applications will only be considered if they strictly meet the guidelines, notably with respect to length and format.

Evaluation procedure and criteria

Each application will be evaluated and scored by two reviewers (from the EG-R expert group) based on the following criteria.

Excellence of ORD Practice – Weight = 0.3

- To what extent will the planned project advance an ORD practice, or support solving (or take a crucial step towards solving) a critical outstanding problem (thus facilitating progress) in the targeted field(s)?
- To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state-of-the-art (e.g. based upon novel concepts/approaches)?
- How well are ORD best practices (e.g., FAIR ones) considered?
- How well does or could the project integrate with existing (ETH Domain) ORD services and infrastructures?

Impact on Community – Weight = 0.4

- To what extent will an existing community (be able to) engage with the contribution to an ORD practice(s) built-up during the project?
- What will be the field(s)-specific extent of the community(-ies) to be reached by the contribution to an ORD practice(s) built-up during the project?
- How and how much will the built-up ORD practice(s) contribute to the respectively targeted research goals and visions within the reached community(-ies)?

Implementation – Weight = 0.3

- To what extent are the proposed measures and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?
- To what extent are the proposed time-plan and resources necessary and properly justified?
- How sustainable is the proposed project inside the ETH Domain? For example, do the applicants lay out how they may cooperate with existing ORD service and infrastructure providers, to ensure the long-term success of the ORD practice(s), if then adopted?

Conflicts of interest on the side of the evaluation committee will be handled according to the guidance available via the programme's website: <https://ethrat.ch/en/measure-1-calls-for-field-specific-actions/>.

Time frame for the decision and the project start

The final decision about each proposal will be announced two months after the submission deadline. Grantees will have to start their project as early as possible but at the latest within **six months** after the decision is communicated.

Reporting requirements and funding release

Funding will be transferred to the grantee's institution in one installment. The installment will be paid at the start of the project, once the grantee has complied with all administrative and ethical requirements.

The grantee will have to comply with the following reporting duties:

1. a **short final scientific report (up to 3 pages)**, within **one month after** the project's end;
2. a **final financial report**, also within **one month after** the project's end.

The grantee will have to explain in the scientific report the key results achieved by the project.

The financial report will have to summarize all the data according to the reporting scheme issued by the Financial Services of the grantee and provide a summary of all spending made during the project duration, including from the contribution of the ETH Domain Board and from the institutions' co-funding.

The grantee will be provided by the EPFL Research Office with templates for the report.

Open science

Grantees should ensure open access to scientific publications (self-archiving or open access publishing) and to all data related to their project's data results.

Ethical and legal compliance

Applicants bear the main responsibility for the planned research project. In particular, they take into account all ethical, legal and societal aspects of the proposed research, and, if granted, they shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations in relations with these matters.