Research Data Conference (RDC) 2026

Call for Proposals

Research Data in Practice - What is the state-of-the-art?

Research Data Management (RDM) support and infrastructures are at the heart of reproducible and responsible science. Far from being a simple task, it relies on support services, robust infrastructure, good governance, cooperation and collaboration, cooperation and collaboration, and sustained institutional commitment. Evolving requirements around Open Research Data (ORD), FAIR and the CARE principles, data protection and security, the building of the new EOSC framework, and the rise of artificial intelligence foster specialisations and new areas of expertise, such as data stewardship and research software engineering.

In this fast-paced environment, the day-to-day implementation of RDM is challenging. How can we effectively support researchers across diverse disciplines and data types? How can support services be scaled while remaining responsive to specific research needs? After nearly a decade of research data management in practice, the Swiss Research Data Support Network (SRDSN) is inviting ORD specialists, data stewards, research software engineers, and researchers who work with research data and develop research software on a daily basis to address the recent challenges and developments.

Through this conference, we aim to discuss the following questions: What strengthens and professionalizes research data management (RDM)? What fosters quality and trust in research data? What can FAIR RDM do to conjugate openness and security? What are the best practices for RDM support? What are the operational and strategic benefits/challenges of operating and developing infrastructure (individually/cooperatively)? How to connect local challenges with global initiatives?

We invite submissions related to (but not limited to) the following areas:

1) Research data support in practice
   - Support models (central/decentral, embedded, faculty-based, service desk, governance)
   - Training and consultation (formats, effectiveness, community building)
   - Collaboration across library, IT services, data stewards or research data engineering teams, legal/data protection units and research ethics committees, and researchers
   - Scaling support (templates, guidelines, checklists, self-service, automation, toolchains)

2) Research Software

- Sustainable research software (testing, packaging, CI/CD, documentation, long-time availability)
- Reproducible analysis (containers, workflow engines, notebooks)
- Software citation, release strategies, preservation (e.g. repository integrations)
- Open Code, FAIR Code principles, code licensing, code review practices

3) Research data professionals as data stewards, data managers, software engineers

- Roles and responsibilities, career paths, service models, skills development across disciplines and organisations
- Embedded and domain-specific data stewardship models
- Competencies, training pathways, curricula alignment and career development
- Measuring impact and value of data stewardship services
- The role of competence centers

4) Open Science & Open Research Data

- Implementing Open Data strategies in projects and institutions
- Legal/ethical aspects: sensitive data, privacy, licensing, ownership and IP, export control and dual use
- IT and research security issues
- Incentives, culture change, recognition for data/software contributions, monitoring
- Data trust and transparency, data publishing, data journals, data papers, impact and reuse
- Open Research Data, Open Software and Open HardwareOpen Data and academic careers - benefits and challenges

5) FAIR data & quality

- FAIR-by-design, metadata, standards, controlled vocabularies
- Persistent identifiers (DOI, ORCID, ROR), citation, provenance
- Data quality, versioning, reproducibility
- CARE principles
- Data management pPlans (DMP): tools, integration, “living DMP” and machine-actionable DMP (maDMP)

6) Research data infrastructures

- Trust principles in research repositories (institutional, disciplinary), storage and archiving solutions, Certifications, Certifications
- Computation models, High Performance Computing and data processing
- National/international initiatives & federations, governance models

7) Policies, compliance & funder requirements

- Responding to funder/publisher requirements
- Institutional and trans-institutional policies, and their implementation in practice
- National (Action) Plans and programs as a framework to create synergies
- Risk assessment and management, information and knowledge security

8) Artificial Intelligence & Data-Intensive Research

- AI-ready and machine-actionable data (FAIR as Fully AI Ready)
- Ethical, legal, and governance aspects of AI in and on research
- AI in data stewardship and research software engineering
- Reproducibility and transparency in AI-driven research

Submission formats

We encourage a variety of formats—practical, interactive, and open to experience reports:

- Presentations (10 min)
- Lightning Talks (3 min)
- Posters (A1 or A0 format?)
- Workshops (60–120 min): hands-on sessions, methods, training concepts, toolchains

How to submit

Please submit an abstract via ConfTool [https://www.conftool.pro/rdc2026] including:

- Title
- Abstract (approx. 200–400 words; for workshops also include agenda, methods & learning objectives)
- Included in the abstract: Target audience (e.g. data stewards, research software engineers, infrastructure teams, researchers…)
- Optional: links to tool/repository/materials (if available)

Please select in your ConfTool submission also:

- 3–5 keywords
- Format (talk/lightning talk/poster/workshop)
- Please, indicate who will present (not more than 2 presenters)

Deadline for submissions: 31 May 2026

About the Conference

Language

The conference language will be English.

Open Access Policy

By submitting a proposal, you agree that your poster and/or presentation will be made online available on Zenodo under an open licence. The expected licences are Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) 4.0 or CC BY-SA.

Code of Conduct

We are committed to a respectful and inclusive environment. The SRDSN's Code of Conduct applies.