

swissuniversities

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2027 Swiss Roadmap for Research Infrastructures swissuniversities' internal governance

General remarks on the implementation of research infrastructure projects

Within the Roadmap for Research Infrastructures 2027 process organised by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), swissuniversities is the body responsible for identifying new research infrastructures supported by the cantonal universities and universities of applied sciences and arts. Research infrastructure projects in the lead of institutions of the ETH Domain follow the internal process established by the ETH Board. The final decision on the funding of projects lies with the HEIs and cantons, or the ETH Board and the ETH Domain institutions¹.

In this context, swissuniversities has developed a process for the Roadmap 2027 (RM27) aiming at coordinating the autonomous decision-making process of HEIs in order to bring about funding commitments at the appropriate time, so that the overall goal of the Roadmap process – the coordination of investments in research infrastructures in Switzerland – can be met.

Concept phase for swissuniversities' internal RM27 process

At its meeting on 1 March 2024, the Board of swissuniversities instructed the Chamber of universities to draw up a proposal for both the 2027 and 2031 processes, with the appropriate involvement of the Chambers of the universities of arts and sciences and the Chamber of teacher education. The Chamber of universities tasked the vice presidents/vice rectors for research (VPsRES) with carrying out the process and ensuring coordination with the ETH Board.

The VPsRES are constituted by the vice presidents of research at the ten cantonal universities and two federal institutes of technology, one representative from the universities of applied sciences and arts, and one representative from the research institutions of the ETH Domain.

The Chamber of universities will accompany the process, adopt the proposals of the VPsRES, and submit them to the Board of swissuniversities for validation.

¹ The ETH Board is the responsible body for research infrastructure projects in the lead of institutions of the ETH Domain. The ETH Board takes its decisions according to its established internal process and in line with SERI's guidelines.

Implementation phase for swissuniversities' internal RM27 process

For the meeting of the Chamber of universities to discuss and confirm project “pre-selection”, rectors/presidents of the universities involved (FH/PH) and directors of institutions (e.g. research institutes of the ETH Domain) will be invited to participate in the discussion.

The Board of swissuniversities then takes the final decision based on the recommendation issued by the Chamber of universities.

Projects carried out jointly by universities and institutions in the ETH Domain (Federal Institutes of Technology or research institutes in the ETH Domain) must be supported by both the Board of swissuniversities and the ETH Board. Additional criteria set by the ETH Board may apply.

After each of the three phases (coordination, prioritization, and pre-selection) in which the VPsRES meet, the Board of swissuniversities will decide as follows, and upon consultation with the Chambers concerned:

Phase A: Coordination based on project ideas

The VPsRES coordinate directly with each other; no recommendation is formulated at this initial stage.

Phase B: Prioritisation based on two-page proposals

The VPsRES formulate a recommendation to the Chamber of universities à priori. The Board of swissuniversities then ‘acknowledges with approval’ (‘zustimmend zur Kenntnis nehmen’) on behalf of swissuniversities on which projects are – at this moment in the stage of conception – welcomed to be handed in as full proposals and submitted to the SNSF.

Phase C: Pre-selection following the SNSF evaluation

The VPsRES formulate a recommendation to the Chamber of universities. The Chamber of universities (with invited guests, if applicable) decides (for the attention of the Board of swissuniversities) which projects are to be proposed to SERI for the roadmap report and which are to be proposed to the responsible HEI for implementation and funding. The Board of swissuniversities will then validate/decide.