

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Editorial

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Dear reader

The SCTO and its network of decentralised Clinical Trial Units (CTUs) have been serving patients and society as a whole since 2008 and have been contributing to a competitive and first-class position of Switzerland as a place for research and innovation. Despite the challenging financial environment and the non-association of Switzerland to the Horizon Europe funding programme, in 2023 the SCTO continued on its mission to enable high-quality clinical research. In the upcoming year, the SCTO will pursue its mission to the research community by fostering and intensifying collaboration between the national research infrastructures, by strengthening the CTU Network, and by increasing the harmonisation of clinical research through tools, guidance, and relevant services. Its decentralised organisation has allowed the SCTO and its network to rapidly adapt to new requirements of the clinical research community and to serve as a local entry point for many questions related to data- and sample-driven research that is governed by Switzerland's Human Research Ordinance (HRO).

In 2023, the SCTO Platforms continued to develop new open resource tools in diverse areas of clinical research. These tools aim to facilitate clinical research and harmonise processes within Switzerland. With a strong focus on HRO projects, networking with partner organisations and external experts could be further intensified, thus enabling the Platforms to build environment required to implement innovation.

The SCTO continues to support patient and public involvement (PPI) by helping clinical researchers to find patient experts for specific research projects, by supporting patients and PPI experts to participate in different lectures and training, and by developing tools and resources that are publicly available. In addition, the SCTO's CTU Network has become the country's largest provider of training and continuing education programmes aimed at building up the next generation of the clinical research workforce. Over the years, the number of both courses and participants have significantly increased, and a growing number of online training opportunities are now available. In 2023, more than 8,000 clinical researchers and clinical research professionals participated in training programmes offered by the SCTO Network.

The SCTO has taken a strong position on the partial revision of the ordinances related to the Human Research Act (HRA) in order to ensure favourable framework conditions for clinical research in the future. The SCTO has also intensified its dialogue with the authorities, taking part in challenging discussions on general consent implementation as a prerequisite for the secondary use of patient data for research purposes.

In 2023, the SCTO became an official full member of the European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN), thus intensifying the collaboration between the Swiss and European infrastructures and allowing Switzerland to be part of competitive, multicentre clinical trials at the European level.

This annual report describes in detail the SCTO's activities over the past year. We hope that you enjoy reading this report and that the activities described in it give you a more in-depth understanding of the clinical research landscape in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ch. Pauli-Magnus". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of the portrait.

Prof. Christiane Pauli-Magnus  
President

## Achievements toward strategic milestones

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### Strategic milestones reached in 2023

The SCTO Platforms developed the following tools and resources for clinical research governed by Switzerland's Human Research Ordinance (HRO):

- [Position paper: Monitoring in Non-Interventional Human Research Projects](#)
- [Regulatory Affairs Watch Issue 8: Experiences with the 2021 changes to the medical device regulatory framework](#)
- [Serious Event Report Form for HRO Research Project](#)
- [Article series: Quality management systems and relevant best practices \(QMS BP\)](#)

### The three pillars of our strategy

Our strategic and operational priorities for 2021–2024 are based on the **three main pillars supporting our vision and mission statements:**

- value and innovation
- education and the next generation
- visibility and transparency

Visit our main website to learn more about our [strategic priorities for 2021–2024](#).

# Patient and public involvement (PPI)

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## Highlights 2023

- PPI was included in various CAS educational programmes and the first Swiss patient expert training by EUPATI Switzerland was held.
- The online PPI course for SNSF IICT 2023 grant applicants entitled “How to Successfully Address the PPI Requirement” was held for the second time.
- Additional PPI templates were created to facilitate collaboration between researchers and PPI contributors.

**A partnership based on both mutual trust and transparent communication is what forms the foundation of a dialogue between researchers and those affected by research. Together with other national stakeholders and patient initiatives, we advocate for a national PPI strategy that considers patients and the public as partners in academic clinical research.**

## Continuing to raise awareness about the significance of PPI

We are delighted to see the integration of patient and public involvement (PPI) into the education of patients as well as current and aspiring clinical research and healthcare professionals.

In May, the SCTO contributed to the first patient expert training course organised by Switzerland’s European Patients’ Academy on Therapeutic Innovation (EUPATI CH). We presented an overview of our PPI activities and provided participants with valuable insights into the significance of and approaches to patient engagement in Switzerland. More information about the course is available (in German) at [EUPATI CH](#).

We also had the privilege of introducing the concept of PPI to participants in the Certificate of [Advanced Studies \(CAS\) for Clinical Research Coordinators](#) at Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH) as well as to participants in the [CAS Qualité des soins](#) at the University of Geneva and the University of Lausanne.

## PPI online course

In March, the SCTO provided an online course for clinical research professionals who were considering applying for funding from the investigator-initiated clinical trials (IICT) programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The course entitled “How to Successfully Address the PPI Requirement” was well attended with 36 participants. A video recording of the 2023 course is available on YouTube, and an [updated version of the course](#) will be offered again in 2024 online.

## New template for planning, tracking, and evaluating PPI activities

In collaboration with our multistakeholder PPI working group, we created a new Excel template to support researchers to plan and track PPI activities within their research projects. The template not only helps researchers evaluate whether those PPI activities had the desired effect but it also includes a contributor’s feedback form (available in English, French, German, and Italian), thus allowing researchers to improve how they collaborate with PPI partners.

## [PPI resources](#)

## Supporting best practices

### Highlights 2023

- Eleven new tools and publications were developed for the clinical research community

In 2023, the SCTO Platforms developed and shared five new tools and six publications with the clinical research community in Switzerland and beyond. Several tools for our new strategic focus on clinical research projects governed by the Human Research Ordinance (HRO) are currently underway and are expected to be made available online in 2024. The diverse activities of our SCTO Platforms contribute to the White Paper Clinical Research's goal to develop innovative and dynamic clinical research approaches.

### Eleven new tools and publications in 2023

- [Routine Monitoring Visit and Close-Out Visit \(RMV-COV\) Report Template](#): This up-to-date and user-friendly monitoring report template can be used to report a routine monitoring visit and close-out visit.
- [Position paper: Monitoring in Non-Interventional Human Research Projects](#): This paper provides recommendations for implementing monitoring strategies for non-interventional human research projects.
- [Annual Safety Report for Investigator Initiated Trials \(IITs\)](#): This template can be used to facilitate the annual safety reporting for IITs.
- [Serious Event Report Form for HRO Research Project](#): This template can be used to report serious events (SE) in HRO projects.
- [QMS BP](#): This publication series fosters continuous improvement and knowledge exchange about quality management systems and relevant best practices (QMS BP) in clinical research.
- [Easy Guide to Clinical Studies – A Practical Tool for Young Clinical Research Professionals](#): This publication appeared in IFAPP Today.
- [The new Federal Act on Data Protection \(nFADP\) Guidance for clinical trials](#): This short guide explains the relevance of the nFADP for clinical research projects.
- [Regulatory Affairs Watch, Issue 8](#): This issue focuses on experiences with the 2021 changes to the medical device regulatory framework.
- [sts graph landmark and redcaptools](#): These tools contain new statistical codes that facilitate the analysis of clinical research data.
- [2023 statistics programming competition](#): There were three grant winners in 2023.

### Human Research Ordinance projects as a strategic focus

The SCTO Platforms form an interconnected, nationwide network that provides practical resources and innovative tools for clinical research professionals. During the 2021–2024 funding period, the SCTO Platforms are focusing on **clinical research governed by Switzerland's Human Research Ordinance (HRO)**. This includes observational clinical research as well as research with data and biological samples. Several projects are already underway, including expanding the Clinical Research Core Competencies Framework so that it aligns to the HRO and offering researchers training opportunities tailored to HRO projects.

### Promoting networking across Switzerland

Each platform consists of a team with expertise and skills related to a key area of clinical research. Each Clinical Trial Unit (CTU) in our CTU Network runs a platform, and each platform includes staff from all CTUs. Collaboration within and between the platforms as well as with partner organisations and external experts promotes networking throughout the country and enables the platforms to be incubators of innovation.

All tools and publications from the SCTO Platforms are available on the [Tools & Resources website](#).

## Swiss contributions to European projects

### Highlights 2023

- Switzerland became a full member of ECRIN, allowing full access to services for the Swiss research community.
- The SCTO participated in the EU-RESPONSE project, the European Research and Preparedness Network for Pandemics and Emerging Infectious Diseases.
- As a partner in the c4c network, Switzerland contributed to a European paediatric study (with ECRIN services and SwissPedNet clinical hubs).

**Switzerland plays a vital role in European research projects. By providing regulatory support for European clinical trials, participating in a pan-European platform for pandemic research and preparedness, and collaborating on a joint publication about sharing sensitive data, our network helps to ensure the success of research projects across Europe.**

### Switzerland acquires ECRIN member status

The [European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network \(ECRIN\)](#) and the SCTO were very pleased to announce that Switzerland officially became an ECRIN European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) member country on 22 May 2023. With the transition of Switzerland to an ECRIN member, ECRIN's network now counts 12 member countries and one observer country. The total reach of the ECRIN network covers over 361 million European citizens, with an average of 6.5 countries participating in each trial.

### Better medicines for children: Swiss contributions to a European study

The [TREOCAPA study](#), which aims to assess the effectiveness of paracetamol on the closure of the ductus arteriosus in very preterm infants, is being performed in Zurich, Geneva, and Lausanne. Zurich was the first centre in Europe that recruited patients and is the centre with the highest recruitment rate. SwissPedNet and the CTU Network contributed to the study, with SwissPedNet recruiting clinical hubs and the CTUs being service providers. The study is part of the [pan-European paediatric clinical trial network c4c](#) (conect4children). The [Swiss Research Network of Clinical Pediatric Hubs](#) (SwissPedNet) is the Swiss hub in the c4c consortium and therefore the contact point for all c4c activities as well as the

link to the Swiss paediatric study sites within SwissPedNet.

### New treatments for COVID-19 patients: Switzerland partners with EU-RESPONSE

The [EU-RESPONSE project](#) (European REsearch and Preparedness netwOrk for pandemics and emerging iNfectious diseaSEs) launched several clinical trials to test treatments for COVID-19 and other emerging infectious diseases. One of these projects is the [EU-SolidAct](#), a pan-European platform for pandemic research and preparedness, which is currently investigating the treatment of patients with severe COVID-19 with baricitinib and the treatment of patients with moderate COVID-19 with bemcentinib. The trials were recruiting patients in 14 countries, and Switzerland received regulatory approval to join them. However, due to decreasing numbers of patients, both trials have been put on hold.

## Fostering dialogue with national authorities

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### Highlights 2023

- Contribution to the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) public consultation on Human Research Act (HRA) Ordinances revision
- Organisation of the roundtable with Swissmedic, swissethics and the CTU Network
- Annual Safety Report form co-developed by the SCTO Safety Platform and swissethics

**Advocating for a balanced and fit-for-purpose regulatory environment for clinical research in Switzerland, the SCTO is engaged in numerous activities. In 2023, we analysed and evaluated the potential impact of the proposed revisions to the ordinances of the Human Research Act (HRA) and provided our feedback during the public consultation process. At our annual roundtable, we continued the dialogue with Swissmedic and swissethics about good clinical practice (GCP) inspections.**

### Contribution to the FOPH's public consultation related to the HRA's ordinances partial revision

On 24 July 2023, the SCTO submitted its consolidated feedback on the partial revision of the ordinances associated with the Human Research Act (HRA) to the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH).

Overall, the FOPH's efforts to adapt to advances in digitalisation and innovative developments are welcome. The additional possibility of e-consent is appreciated and is considered a big step forward in the endeavour to foster digitalisation.

However, several changes raise serious concerns in terms of usability and practicability. There is considerable concern that the proposed changes cannot be transferred into real-life research without an additional administrative burden to researchers and their organisations (i.e. hospitals).

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the FOPH in 2024.

### Roundtable with Swissmedic and swissethics on 23 November 2023

Since 2014, the SCTO has organised an annual roundtable discussion between experts from Swissmedic, swissethics, and the SCTO CTU Network in order to discuss challenges and share news from each of the institutions. This discussion serves to promote mutual understanding and cooperation when it comes to resolving operational difficulties in the area of clinical research.

This year's roundtable focused on the revised Informed Consent Form Template from swissethics as well as the results of Swissmedic's Good Clinical Practice (GCP) inspections and the Electronic Submission Portal IMP/ATMPs from Swissmedic.

### Annual Safety Report form co-developed by the SCTO Safety Platform and swissethics

The SCTO Safety Platform and swissethics revised together the Annual Safety Report form for investigator-initiated trials (IITs) governed by the Clinical Trials Ordinance (ClinO) and/or the Ordinance on Clinical Trials with Medical Devices (ClinO-MD).



# Education and the next generation

## Highlights 2023

- The training course database on the CR Careers website was expanded to include other relevant academic training options (not only training offered by the SCTO CTUs).
- The CR Careers website had more than 2,900 users.
- The Clinical Research Core Competencies Framework was updated to include core competencies related research projects under the Human Research Ordinance (HRO).
- The Clinical Trial Unit (CTU) Network trained more than 8,252 individuals.
- Switzerland's first training course to become a patient expert was offered.

**The SCTO CTU Network is the country's largest overall provider of training and continuing education courses thus aiming at building up the next generation of the clinical research workforce. The Clinical Research Careers website helps young researchers make their way in the complex field of clinical research. In 2023, the website's course database was expanded, and the website was viewed over 8,000 times.**

## CR Careers website includes statistics, data science, and epidemiology courses

The [Clinical Research Careers \(CR Careers\) website](#) helps medical students, young physicians, and all research professionals make their way in the complex and exciting field of clinical research. In 2023, the website was visited over 8,000 times by more than 2,900 users. The training course database on the CR Careers website was expanded with relevant statistics, data science, and epidemiology training options. Moreover, private funding opportunities were added to the website. These developments fit with the goals, recommendations, and measures formulated in the White Paper Clinical Research, published in July 2021 by the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences (SAMS).

The CR Careers website was developed through a collaboration between SAMS, the SCTO, and unimeduisse. It includes several work packages from the Roadmap 2016–2021 for Developing the Next Generation of Clinical Researchers, published in 2016 by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH). The website contains searchable databases with programmes for career support, funding, and mentoring as well as postgraduate training options in Switzerland. The website also includes the Clinical Research Core Competencies Framework for planning and conducting clinical trials and inspiring success stories of physicians who combine clinical research and clinical duties.

## Clinical Research Core Competencies Framework for HRO projects

Young researchers starting down their clinical research career path often begin with Human Research Ordinance (HRO) projects. Moreover, most of the projects submitted to Swiss Ethics committees fall under the HRO. In order to help young researchers acquire the necessary professional qualifications, the core competencies necessary to run HRO projects were adapted from the [Clinical Research Core Competencies Framework \(CRCC Framework\)](#). This HRO competencies framework will be available online in 2024.

## Largest clinical research training provider

In 2023, the SCTO CTU Network trained more than 8,252 researchers, mainly in good clinical practice (GCP) but also in other topics related to clinical research. In addition, the network launched with EUPATI-CH a new course to provide training to patient representatives for patient involvement in clinical research. In 2023, 23 patients graduated from the course, thus becoming EUPATI patient experts.

## Partnering with stakeholders

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### Highlights 2023

The SCTO has been represented in the national Coordination Platform Clinical Research (CPCR) since its inception in 2021. In 2023, the SCTO led and contributed to several working groups, including:

- Regulatory Pain Points
- Mapping of Services
- Career Support

**The SCTO and its Clinical Trial Unit (CTU) Network collaborate at both the national and regional levels. Our coordination of activities with other clinical research infrastructures and stakeholders in Switzerland is aligned to the goals for avoiding overlapping activities and benefiting from synergies that are presented in the publication White Paper Clinical Research.**

### Regular exchange with SBP and SPHN

In order to align activities with complementary clinical research infrastructures, regular meetings with the [Swiss Biobanking Platform \(SBP\)](#) and the [Swiss Personalized Health Network \(SPHN\)](#) took place in 2023. The aim of these meetings was to address topics of mutual interest, share expertise, and decide on an aligned way forward.

### National coordination for a more favourable regulatory environment

Our President, Professor Christiane Pauli-Magnus, has been representing the SCTO in the [national Coordination Platform for Clinical Research \(CPCR\)](#) since its launch in December 2021. In 2023, the SCTO carried out its first mandate towards contributing to the vision laid out in the White Paper Clinical Research (WPCR), which was published in 2021. For this first mandate from the CPCR, the SCTO established and led multistakeholder working groups that included patient representatives, among other stakeholders. The groups assembled key regulatory pain points in clinical research, elaborated a Swiss wide mapping of services by the relevant stakeholders, and defined minimal standards for clinical PhD programs in Switzerland. The aim of these working groups is to provide recommendations to the CPCR.

### Continued support for EUPATI Switzerland

From the beginning, the SCTO and the University Hospital Basel have supported the founding of the [European Patients' Academy on Therapeutic Innovation \(EUPATI\) Switzerland](#). In 2023, the SCTO continued hosting EUPATI Switzerland's secretariat and supported its Executive Board in its strategic endeavours, especially with regards to EUPATI Switzerland's patient expert training course. In 2023, the first Swiss patient expert course for patient involvement in clinical research was held jointly by EUPATI CH and the University Hospital Basel's Department of Clinical Research. The SCTO actively contributed with lectures on certain topics.

# SwissPedNet

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## Highlights 2023

- SwissPedNet relaunched its website.
- Two point-prevalence studies were carried out involving all of SwissPedNet’s hubs.
- SwissPedNet contributed to SPHN’s activities with the Pediatric Personalized Research Network Switzerland (SwissPedHealth) – a joint paediatric national data stream.
- SwissPedNet finalised a Master Service Agreement template covering all large children’s hospitals in Switzerland.

**SwissPedNet has been on the move for more than ten years as a network: “what we have built up is something to be proud of, and something under constant change and development”.**

**To make these features more visible, SwissPedNet relaunched its website in 2023. It also drew up a flexible Master Service Agreement template that sets out the general principles of collaboration and can be easily applied to various studies.**

## Improving the quality of paediatric healthcare and children’s health in Switzerland through research

In June 2023, SwissPedNet conducted the second point-prevalence study (PPS) within the network investigating the prevalence of traumatic brain injuries in children treated in Switzerland’s children’s hospitals. All ten SwissPedNet hubs took part in both PPSs, collecting and entering their data. These point-prevalence studies highlighted two outcomes:

- SwissPedNet is able to coordinate projects covering the entire country.
- Data collection in Switzerland’s children’s hospitals is highly individualised, different from site to site, and far from being automated. The data collection needs to be improved and harmonised in the coming years.

Basic infrastructure and governance were established and nested projects were initiated for the Pediatric Personalized Research Network Switzerland (SwissPedHealth), a joint paediatric national data stream. The first data transfer from SwissPedNet hubs is expected in summer 2024.

## Connecting within Switzerland and abroad to facilitate paediatric clinical studies

SwissPedNet actively supports multicentric and local studies as well as research projects. With the elaboration of a Master Service Agreement

template, a first step has been achieved towards simplifying collaboration between the hubs.

SwissPedNet plans to further simplify collaboration and improve support for multicentre studies by providing its hubs with additional supporting documents that promote multicentre studies, increase data quality, and save resources.

SwissPedNet is a member of the connect4children (c4c) consortium, the pan-European network that aims to facilitate the development of new drugs and other therapies for the entire paediatric population. Several SwissPedNet hubs are currently participating in two studies (TRECOPA and FIONA).

## Innovative training and further education opportunities for the next generation

SwissPedNet held its tenth [SwissPedNet Translational & Clinical Research Session](#) at the annual conference of Pédiatrie Suisse.

In 2023, SwissPedNet organised several events to give the hubs opportunities for exchange. Two members invited all of the hubs’ employees (study coordinators, doctors, etc.) to Basel and Lucerne, which were excellent opportunities to see the hubs’ premises and promote networking and collaboration between the hubs and SwissPedNet’s working groups. Furthermore, SwissPedNet organised a parallel session for study

coordinators at its General Assembly, which included workshops on different topics (contracts, billing, QMS, SOPs, etc.) and promoted exchange.

## SCTO events in 2023

### Highlights 2023

- The SCTO Forum on patient recruitment in clinical trials was held with 54 participants.
- The SCTO Symposium on clinical research in the age of digital health was held with over 170 participants.
- SCTO Platforms launched a new lunch meeting series.

**Research thrives on lively exchange, collaboration, and ventures founded on trust. To foster these conditions, the SCTO has established a strong tradition of hosting events and providing opportunities to debate challenges and developments in research. We organise these events together with regional universities and their hospitals as well as with other international clinical research infrastructures in order to stay rooted in science, learning, and practice.**

### SCTO Forum 2023 on patient recruitment in clinical trials

The SCTO Forum 2023, which focused on **patient recruitment in clinical trials**, was held in person after two years of online meetings. The 54 participants were treated to interesting presentations on the forum's topic. The discussions focused on planning efficient patient recruitment, managing the recruitment process itself, and avoiding the early withdrawal of participants from clinical trials. The slides from the presentations as well as the forum's programme are available on [our website](#).

### SCTO Symposium 2023 on clinical research in the age of digital health

In June, the SCTO Symposium 2023 in St. Gallen was devoted to the topic of **clinical research in the age of digital health** and was co-organised with the CTU St.Gallen. During our symposium, we looked at real-life examples of digital health applications in clinical research projects and discussed legal and ethical aspects that have to be taken into consideration. Over 170 participants attended the event. A selection of slides from the presentations as well as the symposium's programme are available on [our website](#).

### SCTO Platforms launched their online lunch meeting series

The SCTO Platforms' lunch meeting series started in September 2023. A total of three online meetings took place in 2023, each with approximately 60 participants from our Clinical Trial Unit (CTU) Network. These initial meetings provided an opportunity for the CTUs to introduce themselves. They presented their units, shared success stories, highlighted achievements, discussed main challenges, and explored ways in which other CTUs or the CTU Network could offer support. Additional lunch meetings on various platform-related topics are planned for 2024.

## Facts and figures: Clinical Trial Unit Network performance indicators

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The SCTO CTU Network is the country's largest provider of services and training for academic clinical research. In 2023, the CTU Network was involved in 2,468 clinical research projects and trained 8,151 clinical research staff and 101 patients.

### Increasing quality through training

In 2023, 8,151 clinical research staff were trained and 202 courses were offered. These courses were mainly given on ethics and good clinical practice (GCP) (36%) or in undergraduate or postgraduate training programmes (MD, MSc, CAS, DAS, PhD) (23%). In the past year, four courses for patients were offered for the first time that trained 101 participants. Nearly 40% of the training provided consisted of other courses related to clinical research, for example research seminars and lectures in specialised curricula.

### Main services provided to projects in an academic setting

The CTU Network offers comprehensive support throughout all phases of a clinical research project. In 2023, a total of 4,375 services were rendered across 2,468 clinical research projects, resulting in an average of 1.8 services per project. The main services offered were related to data management and consultancy. One-third of the projects supported were multicentre projects, and most of the funding came from academic sources.

### Contributions to over 180 scientific publications

Acting as academic partners, members of the CTU Network co-authored 180 scientific publications in 2023.

2,468

projects supported

4,375

services to projects

206

training courses

8,252

course participants

180

publications (co)-authored

7

Clinical Trial Units within the network

291

people employed by the CTU network  
213.4 full-time equivalents

**Services provided to the projects****4,204**

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Data Management	23%
Consulting	28%
Statistics / Methodology	15%
Monitoring	9%
Regulatory Affairs	12%
Project Management / Study Coordination	5%
Coordinator / Study nurse / Physician	3%
Quality Assurance-Audits	<1%
Quality Assurance-Pharmacovigilance / Safety	<1%
Quality Assurance-SOPs	2%
Data Science	2%

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**Training courses delivered****206**

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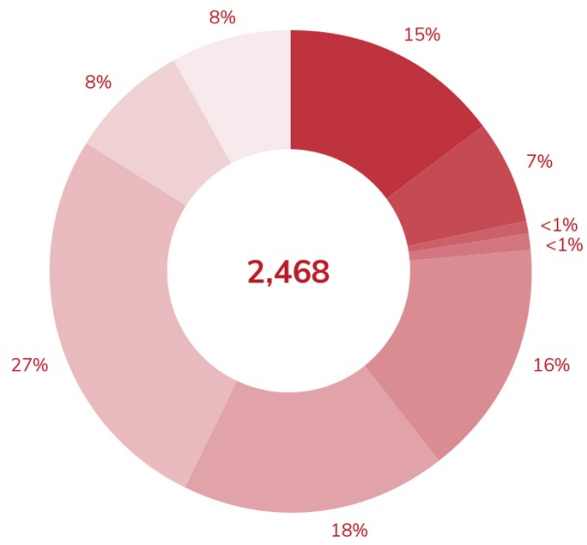
GCP refresher, continuing GCP education	4%
Research Ethics and GCP (Investigator Level)	24%
Research Ethics and GCP (Sponsor-Investigator Level)	8%
Undergraduate e.g. MD, MSc	10%
Postgraduate (CAS, DAS, MSc/MAS, PhD)	13%
Patient courses	2%
Other (clinical research related)	39%

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## Main characteristics of supported projects

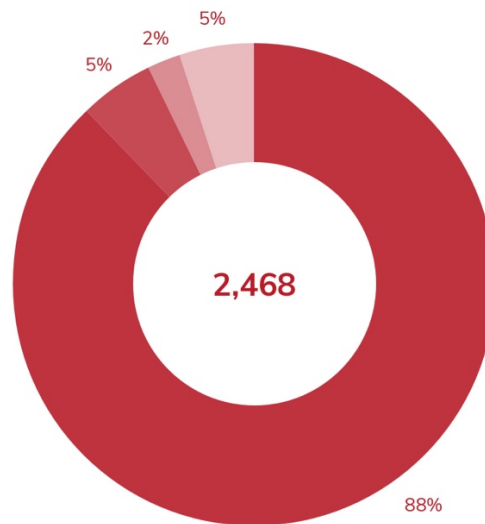
### Type of projects supported

- Investigational medicinal product (IMP, ClinO)
- Medical devices (MD, ClinO)
- Transplantation (ClinO)
- Transplant products / Gene therapy (ClinO)
- Other (ClinO)
- Further use of data or samples (HRO)
- Sample / data collection (HRO)
- Non-HRA regulated projects
- Unknown



### Sponsor of projects

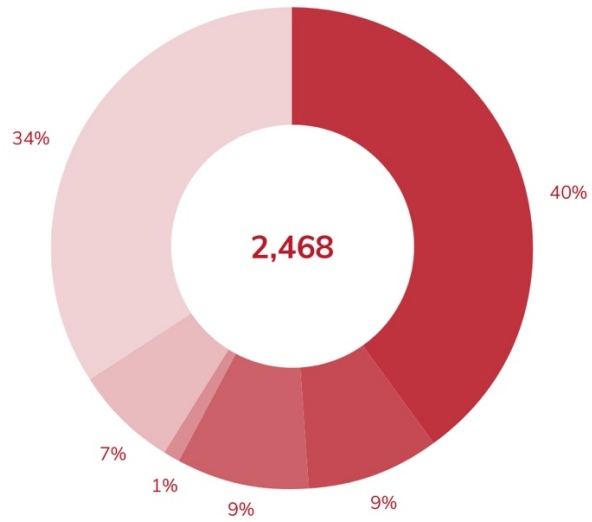
- Academy
- Industry
- Other
- Unknown





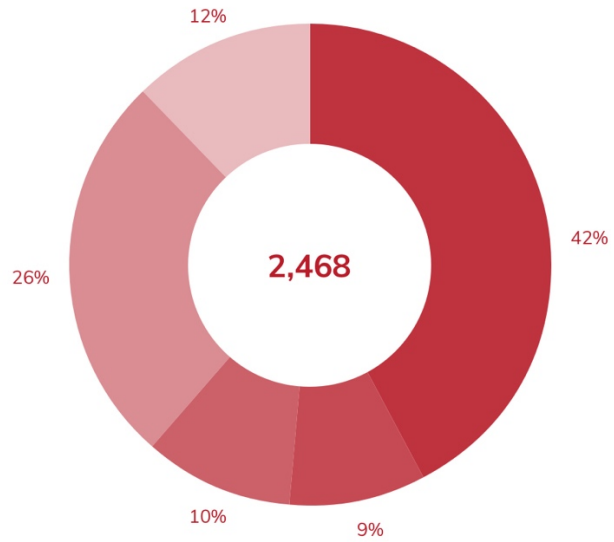
### Funding category

- Academy
- Commercial
- Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)
- European Union
- Other non-profit
- Unknown



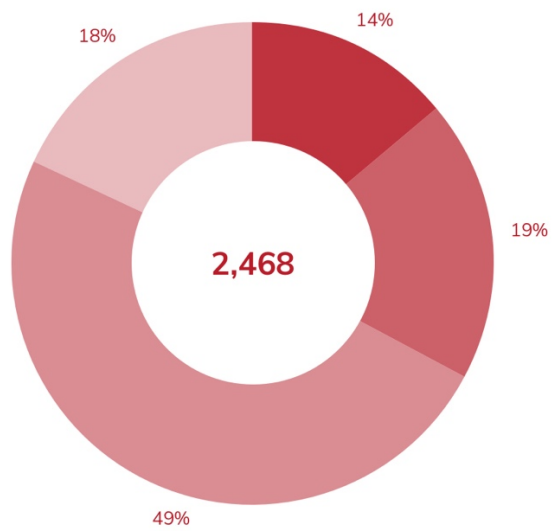
### Risk categories of supported projects

- Risk category A
- Risk category B
- Risk category C
- Not applicable (NON-HRA)
- Unknown



### Design of projects

- Multicentre international study
- Multicentre Swiss study
- Single centre
- Unknown / missing



## Facts and figures: Tools & Resources website

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### About the Tools & Resources website

The SCTO Platforms form an interconnected, nationwide network that provides practical resources and innovative tools for clinical research professionals. In June 2021, we launched the new [Tools & Resources website](#) to increase the visibility of the platforms and their products and

to facilitate measuring their performance. In 2023, the Tools & Resources website attracted 14,348 users from all around the world, with the majority coming from Switzerland, followed by the United States. In total, users downloaded 5,200 resources from the website.

### Key figures from 2023

**11**

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new tools and publications were published on our Tools & Resources website

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**14,348**

---

users visited the website

---

**5,200**

---

items were downloaded from the website

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# Facts and figures:

## Communications and stakeholder engagement

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### Our audiences

**2,800**

newsletter subscribers

**598**

X followers

**1,820**

LinkedIn followers

### Our channels

**30**

newsletters and news posts

**114**

different topics and reading tips

**72**

X posts

**80**

posts on LinkedIn

### Our websites

**10,819**

users on the SCTO's main website

**14,388**

users on the SCTO Platforms' Tools & Resources website

**2,951**

users on the Clinical Research Careers website

## Our events

**6**

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events organised by the SCTO

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**17**

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contributions to third-party events

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**453**

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participants at our 6 events

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## Financial statement

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**The SCTO will remain on a firm financial footing provided the government does not reduce its funding. Its balanced financial result for 2023 is due to responsible management as well as accurate financial planning and effective financial controls.**

The SCTO closed out its 2023 financial year with a slight profit. This positive result was due to personnel changes and administrative adjustments.

In order to carry out any new mandates, the SCTO will require additional funding or will need to reduce the scale of its existing activities.

The SCTO plans to invest the additional income in its reprioritised communication activities (concept and website). BDO AG audited the SCTO's 2023 financial statement.

Expenses	CHF
<b>Personnel expenses</b>	
Salaries	1,016K
Social charges	202K
remaining personnel expenses	25K
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,243K</b>
<b>Clinical Operations</b>	
Platforms management and liaison costs	27K
Funding Network (CTU Network and SwissPedNet hubs)	4,100K
other	299K
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,426K</b>

## Business Operations

Administration charges	76K
Fiduciary charges	24K
IT	20K
<b>Total</b>	<b>120K</b>

## Communication

Website	12K
Translation service	6K
Miscellaneous	25K
<b>Total</b>	<b>43K</b>

## Patient and Public Involvement

organisational costs	22K
<b>Total</b>	<b>22K</b>

## Events

Symposium / Forum / other	35K
<b>Total</b>	<b>35K</b>

**Total expenses** 5,889K

## Income CHF

Swiss National Science Foundation	1,000K
State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation	4,434K
SCTO Association	140K
Refund EU-Projects	178K
Other (Events, SecuTrial, Advisor)	164K
<b>Total income</b>	<b>5,916K</b>

**Status of association assets 31.12.2023** 240K

## Governance

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### Closing a challenging 2023 and preparing for the new funding period 2025–2028: Changes and outlook for the future.

2023 was an important year for the SCTO, with the definition of the next funding period strategy, the related application for funds to the State Secretariate for Education Research and Innovation (SERI), and an evaluation from the Swiss Science Council. Their recommendations will serve as basis for the fund's allocation for 2025–2028 to research infrastructures at the end of 2024.

During 2023, some structural changes at the Executive Office were considered necessary to meet the challenges of the new funding period. While there is an increasing need to strategically position the SCTO in Switzerland's research landscape and align with other national stakeholders, coordinative tasks at the level of the SCTO Platforms have decreased. The balance between centralised and decentralised tasks at the level of the Executive Office and the Clinical Trial Units has been readjusted; some operative tasks, such as leading the SCTO's Education Platform, have been shifted to the CTUs.

At the governance level, the following changes took place in the Steering Board in 2023:

- Prof. Alexandra Calmy, Hôpitaux Universitaires Genève, was elected as a new Steering Board member. She succeeded Prof. Jérôme Pugin, who left the Steering Board as of 1 November 2023.
- Prof. Thomas Geiser, Inselspital (Universitätsspital Bern), has stepped down from the Steering Board at the end of 2023. Dr Danielle Krebs took over his position in an interim capacity.
- Prof. Michele Ghielmini, Ente Ospedaliero Cantonale Ticino (EOC), left the Steering Board as of 1 September 2023. He was replaced by Prof. Alessandro Ceschi.

2024 will be an important year for the SCTO, with the Swiss National Science Foundation's (SNSF's) evaluation process of research infrastructures, the end of the current funding period, and preparations for setting off towards new goals and horizons in 2025–2028. Increased collaboration with other research infrastructures (including in the data field) and non-university hospitals as well as the systematic implementation of research on research (meta-research) are some of the new areas the SCTO will prepare to develop in the upcoming funding period.

## About us

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### New and better therapies thanks to research.

The Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation (SCTO) is a **national research infrastructure and an academic reference institution for high-quality, patient-oriented clinical research in Switzerland.**

In 2017, the SCTO was designated a research infrastructure of national importance, and it is funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).

The SCTO's primary objective is to catalyse valuable and innovative clinical research in Switzerland in order to make new and better therapies available to society.

The SCTO Executive Office ensures the liaison between the SCTO Platforms and other Swiss and European partners, proposes and coordinates the SCTO's strategy, and projects at national level. The SCTO Executive Office is also responsible for the financial and operational management and supports the governance of the organisation.

More information about us :

- [Members and boards](#)
- [Executive Office](#)
- [Vision and mission](#)

## Contact

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Do you have any questions or want to give us feedback?  
Contact us at [info@scto.ch](mailto:info@scto.ch).

Follow us on:



## Imprint

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