



UK Science
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Network



UK Science & Innovation Network Country Snapshot:

Switzerland

1. Science and Innovation Landscape

Switzerland is a serious player on the international Science and Innovation scene. In 2024, for the 14th year running, Switzerland was top of the [Global Innovation Index](#). On the wider [European Innovation Scoreboard](#) in 2024 the country confirmed its top position as the overall Innovation Leader for the Europe region. In terms of the number of patent applications per capita, Switzerland occupies a leading position worldwide. Switzerland [invests over CHF 23 billion \(£20.7bn\) in research and development \(R&D\) annually](#), which equates to 3.15% of its gross domestic product, making it one of the highest investors in R&D in the world. The private sector is a major contributor to R&D in Switzerland, making up more than 70% of Swiss research expenditure and investing a total of CHF 15.5 billion (2.1% of GDP) in 2019. Higher education is diversified in Switzerland and powers are shared between the cantons and the Confederation. It comprises ten Cantonal universities and two Federal institutes of technology (ETHZ and EPFL, plus four affiliated national research institutes: PSI, EMPA, EAWAG and WSL) and universities of applied sciences, geared towards practical training and applied research. Switzerland hosts two (ETHZ 7th and EPFL 26th worldwide in [QS WUR 2025](#)) of the top ten universities in Europe – 6 are located in the UK. In 2024, Switzerland's scientific publications had the tenth highest global impact according to the [nature index](#).

Federal strategy and funding for Education, Research and Innovation 2021-2024

The Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), headed by State Secretary Martina Hirayama, publishes a white paper every 4 years 'Message on promotion of education, research and innovation' defining its strategy and policy priorities. In 2025-2028 priorities focus on: [Digitalisation](#); [Sustainable development](#); [Equal opportunities](#); [National and international cooperation](#).



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The Swiss Parliament has approved a total of around CHF 29.2 billion in guaranteed credits and payment frameworks for the ERI Dispatch 2025–2028. The detailed funding allocations still need to be decided by Parliament.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences and Innosuisse are responsible for promoting research and innovation in Switzerland. International collaborative calls are advertised by [SNSF](#) and [Innosuisse](#).

2. UK partnership with Switzerland on ST&I

Switzerland is a key partner for the UK given the excellence in innovation and our complementary approaches to science and innovation. Our respective Science Ministries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Collaboration in Science and Innovation in November 2022 with a focus on 1. collaboration in deep science & tech 2. innovation and 3. collaboration over international R&I policy. It is a testament to our desire to foster more collaboration between our scientific and innovation communities. The MOU has identified several areas of focus such as life sciences, energy and cleantech, climate, artificial intelligence, data, space and quantum. However, collaboration is encouraged across all fields.

The Science & Innovation Network (SIN) in Switzerland works to support UK science excellence and innovation policy objectives and contributes towards the delivery of the MOU priorities by working closely with Swiss government and its S&I actors.

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