

Call for RSE Ambassadors



Are you a Research Software Engineer (RSE)?

There is no unique definition for “what is an RSE”, and people in a variety of roles **self-identify as RSE**. You may consider yourself an RSE if you can answer “yes” to at least one of the following questions:

- I like programming as much as science, and maybe a little bit more.
- I use programming expertise to advance research.
- I apply software engineering skills and practices to create more robust, manageable, and sustainable research software.

You can find more information here: <https://enhancer.ch/rse/>

Why are we building the RSE community in Switzerland?

Despite playing an important role in modern research, **software developers in academia often lack recognition**. Without a clear career path, software engineers in research are usually stuck with limited opportunities for progression or job security. One of the overarching goals of the RSE community is to highlight the contributions of RSEs and advocate for better recognition of this role.

Also, by supporting RSEs, the development of reliable, well-structured research software is promoted, **enhancing the quality and sustainability of research**.

RSEs are mostly embedded within individual research groups, with limited possibility of wider technical exchange. **An RSE community offers a platform for sharing experiences and best practices**. RSEs benefit from being part of a growing and supportive group that understands their work and challenges.

For already ongoing RSE activities in the ETH Domain, see <https://rse.ethz.ch/> and <https://rse.epfl.ch/>

What is an RSE Ambassador?

RSE Ambassadors advocate for and support the Research Software Engineer (RSE) community. They play a crucial role in raising awareness about the importance of research software engineers in academia and research institutions. RSE Ambassadors facilitate networking and collaboration within the community. They also engage in organizing meetings, outreach activities, sharing best practices and help to increase the visibility of the RSE community in Switzerland.

About this call

The EnhanceR association (<https://www.enhancer.ch/>) aims to **support the RSE community by providing funding for RSEs that want to engage as RSE Ambassadors**.

We fund applicants from academic/research institutions for one year:

- Institutions which are **members** of the EnhanceR association with **10,000 CHF**
- Institutions which are **not EnhanceR members** with **5,000 CHF**

If you are not sure if your institution is a member of the EnhanceR association, you can find the list of members at <https://www.enhancer.ch/about>

We particularly encourage applications from volunteers from academic institutions with no or very early-stage RSE communities.

As an RSE Ambassador, your overarching goals would be to:

1. Promote the RSE community idea and engage in the buildup of an RSE community in your institution. Ideally, you are already connected with key groups in your institution for this purpose.
2. Disseminate information about external RSE & EnhanceR events within your institution.

In addition, **we expect you to:**

3. Regularly exchange with the RSE4ORD project team for updates about activities and ideas.
4. Present at an event or in a seminar organized by RSE4ORD & EnhanceR.
5. If your institution is not yet an EnhanceR member, present ideas on motivating a membership.

How to apply

The application should be a **single page** including the following details:

- Your profile and your background.
- Your motivation for promoting RSE community efforts.
- Your ideas and plans for contribution to and development of the RSE and EnhanceR communities, including transferrable soft and technical skills and proposed ways of sharing them, e.g. seminars, workshops, online platforms content, etc.

The application should be sent by email to ambassadors@enhancer.ch

Note: Funding can only be transferred to an institutional account. Your application should contain the name and signature of your supervisor at the bottom to confirm their support for your engagement.

The funding is supposed to compensate for your time and other costs related to your role as an ambassador, e.g. to organize events or also to attend conferences to connect with the worldwide RSE community.

Timeline for the application

- 23. March 2025: Deadline for submitting application
- 11. April 2025: Feedback about decision by the EnhanceR association

The period for engaging as Ambassador is 1 year, starting after communication of decision.

Questions?

If you have any open questions about this Call, we offer an **open information event, taking place on 3. March 2025, 15:00–15:30** via Zoom at <https://ethz.zoom.us/j/63305363429>

Please reach out to us at ambassadors@enhancer.ch if you have questions but are not available on this day and time.