

PRESS RELEASE

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The Swiss army knife for establishing and managing foundations: the Swiss Foundation Code 2021

First published in 2005, the Swiss Foundation Code establishes international good governance guidelines in philanthropy and serves as an orientation framework for all types and sizes of foundations. The fourth, completely revised edition is now available for free download, in German, French and English, on the website of the editor, SwissFoundations. The Code's co-authors are Thomas Sprecher, Philipp Egger and Georg von Schnurbein.

With over 13,000 charitable foundations, there are six times more charitable foundations per capita in Switzerland than in the USA or Germany. The growth and dynamic development of the foundation sector are underpinned by liberal framework conditions. Building on this, charitable foundations make a significant contribution to tackling social challenges as an independent third force alongside the State and the economy. Despite their excellent reputation, charitable foundations in Switzerland also face pressure to prove their legitimacy. This is a good thing since the actions of foundations always need to be reflected upon.

“What a toolbox is to a craftsperson, the Swiss Foundation Code is to all people working in or for foundations – in whatever capacity. The Code is comprehensive, clearly laid out and easily accessible.”

Philipp Egger, author

The Swiss Foundation Code is constantly evolving

Owing to the dynamic development of the foundation sector, the Swiss Foundation Code needs to be regularly revised. First published in 2005, updated in 2009 and again in 2015, it is now available as a completely revised fourth edition in 2021. The Swiss Foundation Code now consists of four principles – effectiveness, checks and balances, transparency and social responsibility – and 28 recommendations.

“The significant change to the Swiss Foundation Code is the fourth principle of ‘social responsibility’. Foundations do not work in isolation; they are connected to society in myriad ways. Therefore, they should – within the scope of their purpose – also advocate for issues such as climate change or migration, which are current social concerns.”

Georg von Schnurbein, author

From the sector for the sector

“Good advice is free: because all foundations can be inspired by the Swiss Foundation Code, it is also available to all, free of charge.”

Thomas Sprecher, author

For the first time, this collective knowledge is now accessible free of charge, from the publication date, thanks to the financial support the project received from more than 30 SwissFoundations members. And in terms of content, the Swiss Foundation Code has also benefited from a broad base of contributions in the form of expertise provided by over 40 foundation experts and authority representatives, during hearings and the subsequent consultation process. Thanks to the co-authors, the fourth edition has once again succeeded in creating a valuable, application-based guide for modern foundation work.

For more information:

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Order and download

You can order the printed edition of the Swiss Foundation Code 2021 from Stämpfli publishers.

English: <http://www.staempfliverlag.com/SFCen>

German: <http://www.staempfliverlag.com/SFCde>

French: <http://www.staempfliverlag.com/SFCfr>

The free e-book is available on the SwissFoundations website:

<https://www.swissfoundations.ch/stiftungspraxis/foundation-governance/>

SwissFoundations – the voice of Swiss grant-making foundations

Founded in 2001, SwissFoundations is Switzerland’s largest network of charitable grant-making foundations. The members and associated partners affiliated with SwissFoundations invest over CHF 1 billion a year in charitable projects and initiatives. This allows SwissFoundations to represent more than a third of all estimated foundation distributions in Switzerland. www.swissfoundations.ch