

EDIHs and Swiss AI Centre: How Swiss SMEs Access Free AI Programmes

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY & CORE TAKEAWAY

Swiss SMEs can now access EDIHs, the Swiss AI Centre, the Canton Zurich AI Innovation Programme and Innosuisse funding: free consulting on use-case identification, test infrastructure, access to AI engineers, regulatory guidance on the EU AI Act and revDSG, and up to 50 percent project funding - if you know where and how to apply.

CONTEXT & EXECUTIVE RELEVANCE

Switzerland has had a national AI action plan since July 2026 - but the real question for your business is no longer whether to engage with it, but how to use the infrastructure it already funds. European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs), the Swiss AI Centre, the Canton Zurich AI Innovation Programme and Innosuisse funding schemes already offer Swiss SMEs free consulting, test infrastructure, access to AI engineers and up to 50 percent project funding. Access is open - it's simply underused, because most SMEs don't know where to start.

A study by HWZ and Swisscom covering 123 Swiss SMEs (September/October 2024) identified three main barriers to AI adoption: a shortage of skilled talent, regulatory uncertainty, and a lack of internal expertise. EDIHs address exactly these three points structurally - not as a subsidy in the classic sense, but as external capacity you tap into temporarily before committing your own investment.

CORE ACTION ITEMS

01 EDIHs and the Swiss AI Centre: consulting, test infrastructure and regulatory guidance, coordinated at cantonal and national level

02 Canton Zurich AI Innovation Programme (SDSC): a one-year, free programme for SMEs culminating in concrete pilots

03 Innosuisse funding: up to 50 percent of project costs for AI initiatives run with a research partner

04 AI Days 2026 (HES-SO): a three-day practical workshop series on ML fundamentals, generative AI and computer vision

SWISS COMPLIANCE & ARCHITECTURE GUIDELINES

- ☑ Full compliance with revised Swiss Data Protection Act (revDSG).
- ☑ Zero vendor lock-in on closed proprietary models.
- ☑ Seamless integration into Abacus, Bexio and M365 ecosystems.

Non-Binding Process Analysis

Let us review in 20 minutes where AI agents create immediate measurable efficiency in your workflows.

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