

## SSPH+ Faculty Meeting 2020 – Session A2 / A3 Discussion: Development of the SSPH+ Strategy 2023-2027

---

### Background

After 12 years of federal funding and a year of transition, SSPH+ operates since 2018 under an agreed-upon 5-year funding mechanism and its strategic activities (2018-2022). SSPH+ has since gone through a series of successful developments carried by its growing academic community, further boosted by COVID-19. The most evident sign is the expansion strategy adopted by the Foundation Board, which resulted in SUPSI and ZHAW (2019) as well as University of Fribourg and BFH (2020) joining the SSPH+ Foundation and in ongoing discussions with EPFL and ETHZ. During the past years the three pillars of the 2018-2022 strategy get fostered through targeted activities coordinated by the SSPH+ Directorate office, funded by core budget and grants, namely **I) research, II) teaching and training, and III) bridging public health sciences with practice**. In line with the "virtual inter-university faculty" concept, the SSPH+ Directorate does not directly engage in those activity domains. Instead, the strategic role of SSPH+ Foundation is to facilitate, coordinate, support and strengthen the inter-university multi-disciplinary collaborations for public health sciences, given the lack of a critical mass in this field at single universities. Accordingly, core-funded and grant-funded activities of SSPH+ are ultimately supporting the SSPH+ university partners to engage in those activity domains. Over the last years, both the facilitation of research and teaching and training was strongly dedicated to PhD students. Namely, SSPH+ supports research in public health sciences through the competitive E.U. co-funded PhD inter-university fellowship program GlobalP3HS (which, together with Botnar Foundation, funds 53 PhDs) whereas the SSPH+ Inter-university Graduate Campus is the hub to foster and coordinate PhD-level trainings for approx. 300 PhDs, offered by the university partners. During 2020, SSPH+ develops its next 5-year strategy (schedule: see Annex below).

### Faculty Meeting (FM) about overarching theme(s) and the strategic pillars of SSPH+ (2023-2027)

To foster outcome-oriented workshops, each breakout group (zoom) focuses on ONE of three THEMES (~30min) and possibly on further "overarching themes" (~10min), not yet mentioned by the Foundation Board.

The RAPPORTEUR of each group makes notes/summaries in the provided file and sends those [snocera@ssphplus.ch](mailto:snocera@ssphplus.ch) and summarizes the conclusions of the group work in max. 2-3 minutes in the short plenary zoom discussion. Keep notes also on debates, divergent views, and preferences. The notes will inform the Directorate for the drafting of the next steps.

The MODERATOR makes sure the discussion remains focused, does not jump to other issues (prior to reach some outcome), keeps the time, and makes sure all can express their views

**MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE GROUP WORK:** Each group expresses its views and visions about ONE of the (currently three) strategic pillars and possible additional ideas beyond those 3 pillars. At this stage, please do not discuss financial concepts or budget allocations. Particular strategic questions to discuss today are e.g.:

1. What type of activities should SSPH+ promote, do, prioritize, initiate, foster under the assigned pillar? How should those activities be adapted in the post-COVID-19 era?
2. Discuss the "unifying themes" the new SSPH+ strategy may adopt as an umbrella. Any ideas beyond those expressed by the Foundation Board?

### BACKGROUND INFOS FOR EACH THEME (also see presentation in Session A1)

**THEME 1: Research:** The acquisition of competitive PhD fellowships (GlobalP3HS/Botnar) or the fundraising and administrative coordination of the national Corona Immunitas program (epidemiological serological surveys) launched by a collaboration of institutes of the SSPH+ community are main examples on how SSPH+ supports research conducted at the partner institutes. SSPH+ also fostered collaborations via collaborative piloting of methods for a grant application or strategic inter-university workshops.

**THEME 2: Teaching & training:** The successfully launched Inter-university Graduate Campus (IGC), the Internship Program for PhD students or the eCampus teaching platform are the focus in this domain. The IGC becomes also a major hub of curricular development for PhDs and supervisors in public health sciences. New offers such as the online live-stream lecture series (with ETHZ) are promising initiatives. For the post-graduate MAS/DAS/CAS programs, SSPH+ does not contribute financially but fosters collaborations and synergies.

**THEME 3: Science-to-Practice:** SSPH+ invested also into the strengthening of the link between science and practice or policy. This has been pursued primarily in the response to federal consultations of public health relevant legislations (often coordinated with the Swiss Society for Public Health and other partners to omit redundancies), and in the context of the science-based development of the law on tobacco products. COVID-19 catalyzed the long-standing plan of SSPH+ to provide multi-disciplinary public health expertise to the Federal Office of Public Health; they signed a 1-year contract for the SSPH+Covid-19 advisory platform.