



IMPACT REPORT

#GenevaLovesData

September 2026

High-quality life-science data: a scientific and strategic priority for Switzerland.

KEY POINTS

Establishing data as a matter for society and sovereignty

SIB, the Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics, was selected to organize the leading European conference on biological data science, which was held in Geneva for the first time from 31 August to 4 September 2026 ([ECCB26.org](https://eccb26.org)).

On this occasion, the #GenevaLovesData initiative created an unprecedented space for dialogue around an issue that had until then been largely invisible: the strategic importance of life-science data for research, health, the environment and artificial intelligence.

Bringing together scientists, policymakers, international organizations, innovation players and the general public, the initiative's programme made it possible (i) to make the value of data visible and understandable, (ii) to make data a strategic and political topic, and (iii) to increase the profile of the Geneva ecosystem and of Switzerland.

These topics will all continue at national level and beyond ECCB, notably thanks to a collective momentum driven by strong partnerships (see p.13) and joint projects.

"Our country holds a leading scientific position. It owes this [...] to institutions such as SIB, whose expertise shines well beyond our borders."

Guy Parmelin, President, Swiss Confederation

KEY FIGURES

1,510

ECCB participants

63

countries represented

7,000

visits to genevalovesdata.org

9

partners

Why now?

Data have become the essential foundation of science: they make it possible to personalize treatments, monitor epidemics and track biodiversity, and they fuel advances in artificial intelligence. Their value, however, depends on their quality and on the infrastructure and expertise that make it possible to preserve, link and interpret them.

In a context of global competition around AI and digital sovereignty, Switzerland's capacity to master these resources is becoming strategic. With the global AI summit planned in Geneva in 2027, momentum is building: a "Road to Geneva" to which #GenevaLovesData is already contributing, by placing trusted data at the heart of the debate.

Three major impacts

#GenevaLovesData brought the strategic topic of data to the forefront, in a lasting way, by achieving three main ambitions.

1. Making the value of data visible and understandable

The *Datarium* exhibition and the Public Forum (see p. 7), as well as the extensive associated media coverage (see p. 8-10) and related content campaigns (e.g. #GenevaLovesData), showed concretely how reliable data contribute to precision medicine, epidemic surveillance, environmental protection and trustworthy AI. The aim: show the infrastructure, expertise and professions that turn data into benefits for society.

- *Datarium*: 30 posters, one-month exhibition in iconic Geneva locations, over 1,700 website visits in two months, over 220 QR code scans, and guided tours for 160 Geneva secondary-school and business-school students ([see their feedback](#)).
- Around a hundred participants at the Public Forum.
- 35 press articles, reports and interviews (radio, television, print press).

"How do scientists gather billions of pieces of information to predict how a tumour will evolve or to know which species to protect as a priority? Set up in the Bastions, 'Datarium' explains."

Tribune de Genève, 14.08.2026, "From DNA to birdsong: how data catalyse innovation"

"[...] more than a thousand scientists will gather to discuss the preservation and exploitation of data produced in the life sciences. [...] Behind this sometimes abstract mission lie very concrete applications that are useful to society."

RTS 19h30, 31.08.2026, "Bioinformatics, a strategic sector in which Switzerland excels, sets up in Geneva"



Guided tour of *Datarium* at the Rotonde du Mont Blanc (credit: N. Righetti | Lundi13) and Public Forum (credit: SIB | G. Bell)

2. Making data a strategic and political topic

All actions – and in particular, the ECCB opening ceremony and the Public Forum on 31 August – placed data quality, research infrastructure and digital sovereignty in the political and institutional debate. The speeches converged on one point: the capacity to produce, preserve and exploit reliable data now determines scientific innovation and AI.

- Presence and statements of the highest federal and cantonal authorities, demonstrating their commitment to the topic to the international scientific community and Switzerland. Their remarkable involvement was hailed by participants as a symbol of Swiss leadership, and positions the country as a role model at international level.
- Dialogue between authorities, research, health, innovation and infrastructure around sovereignty, responsibility and competitiveness.
- Strategic discussions on the sidelines of ECCB on the sustainable funding of biodata infrastructure.

"We are entering an era in which our capacity to observe, model and transform living systems is advancing at phenomenal speed. That power opens immense prospects – and places demands on us to match."

Guy Parmelin, President, Swiss Confederation

"Geneva is proud to be a global hub and a centre of excellence in the processing of biological data."

Anne Hiltpold, President, Council of State of the Republic and Canton of Geneva

3. Raising the profile of the Geneva ecosystem and Switzerland in life-science data

Thanks to its collective approach, #GenevaLovesData brought together players who share a growing dependence on quality scientific data, but who do not yet present themselves as a common ecosystem: research, hospitals, infrastructure, authorities, international organizations and the private sector. This positioning was made visible to the population and local authorities as well as to the international scientific community.

- 9 official Geneva, federal and international partners and supporters of the initiative (see p. 13).
- ECCB: more than 1,500 participants, 551 institutions/affiliations, and 63 countries represented.
- Presence of scientists and leaders from the University of Geneva (UNIGE), the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG), the Natural History Museum and the Botanical Garden of Geneva, federal administrations (e.g. SERI, FDFA), the European life-science data infrastructure ELIXIR, the World Health Organization, CERN, the SIB Scientific Advisory Board, and other international networks.
- Formal and informal networking moments: opening ceremony, public forum, evening events and speakers' dinner, with Geneva as the common setting.



Flags on the Mont Blanc bridge (Credit: N. Righetti | Lundi13) and the 1,510 participants at ECCB (Credit: SIB | G. Bell)

From initiative to long-term momentum

#GenevaLovesData made data a meeting point between science, policy and society – and positioned SIB as a player capable of bringing these communities together around strategic issues for Switzerland. Several avenues have already been identified to extend the momentum.

1. Putting trusted scientific data on the political agenda

The political mobilization in front of the national and international scientific communities at ECCB is a strong first signal to be translated into concrete action. The first challenge is therefore to turn this recognition into a lasting priority for science, innovation and digital sovereignty policy.

- Include data quality and the importance of research infrastructure among the central themes of the “*Road to Geneva*” towards the AI Summit 2027.
- Broaden the mobilization to German-speaking Switzerland and to European partners.
- Continue calling for long-term support for research infrastructure providing high-quality biodata.

2. Building a national coalition around trusted data

Switzerland has complementary strengths – science, health, multilateralism, infrastructure, innovation – that could be better articulated around a common ambition.

- Mobilize Swiss players to promote the existing expertise that strengthens the country’s digital sovereignty.
- Develop joint statements on the importance of high-quality scientific data for trustworthy AI.
- Maintain the relationships built around #GenevaLovesData through targeted meetings and joint projects.

3. Continuing the dialogue with society

Trust in data and AI cannot rest solely on scientific expertise: it requires making choices, benefits and limitations understandable, and dialogue possible.

- Take *Datarium* to other venues in Switzerland.
- Continue formats for dialogue between scientists, decisionmakers and citizens.
- Develop content showing concrete examples of the infrastructure and expertise behind visible advances.

#GenevaLovesData in action

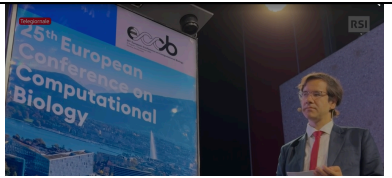
DATARIUM	Public exhibition in the Parc des Bastions and at the Rotonde du Mont-Blanc, and in digital form at datarium.ch: 30 posters on the role of data for precision oncology, personalized health, epidemic preparedness, the environment and AI. Next stop: open day of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva (7 November 2026). Official opening in the presence of Joëlle Bertossa, City of Geneva Administrative Councillor in charge of the Department of Culture and Digital Transition (read the news).
PUBLIC FORUM	Held on the first day of the ECCB conference, it brought together around a hundred participants for a dialogue (talks, panel discussion, participatory workshops) between citizens, scientists, HUG, UNIGE, SIB, and cantonal and federal authorities on data uses, ethics, sovereignty and AI (read the news).
ECCB OPENING CEREMONY	More than 1,500 scientists from 63 countries, with speeches by the President of the Swiss Confederation, the President of the Geneva Council of State, and the Rector of UNIGE, in the presence of the President of the National Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation as well as members of the Geneva Parliament and the National Council (more on the event and read / watch the speeches).
ART & SCIENCE	<i>Carte blanche</i> to local artists with an original performance (video) closing the opening ceremony and offering a poetic tribute to where life meets data.
NETWORKING	Evening events and speakers' dinner bringing together international scientists, institutional representatives and partners, including: representatives of ELIXIR – the European research infrastructure for life sciences – the World Health Organization, CERN, and the Scientific Advisory Board of SIB.
VISIBILITY	News (e.g. wrap-up article), opinion pieces (e.g. Simone de Montmollin) and press releases, digital campaigns (SIB, ECCB and partner accounts – see p.11), posters in public spaces and on Geneva public transport, flags on the Mont-Blanc bridge, illumination of the Jet d'Eau and media coverage.

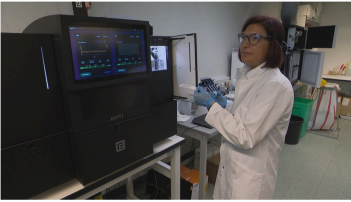
Coverage puts key issues on the agenda

Coverage of #GenevaLovesData went well beyond event announcements, both on social networks and in the media. Subjects covered include bioinformatics as a strategic field, the reliability of data for AI and the position of Geneva and Switzerland as hubs for life-science data, as well as projects with concrete applications. This range of content is an important indicator of the initiative's success in bringing data and bioinformatics into public debate.

Selected media coverage and institutional promotion

Media	Title (translated)	Format	Preview
Journal de l'UNIGE, 16.09.26	Geneva, capital of life science data	Interview with Maïa Berman and Dorian Ziegler (SIB)	
Le Temps, 03.09.26	From data extracted from living organisms, we bring out formulas and algorithms	Interview with Aleksandra Walczak (CNRS)	
RTS La Première, CQFD, 02.09.26	Real-time pathogen surveillance	Interview with Valérie Barbié (SIB)	

PME Magazine	When data and AI redraw the art of the CV	Interview with Dala Egger (SIB)	
Tribune de Genève, 01.09.26	The canton welcomes 1,500 world experts in life science data	Press release pick-up	
Dauphiné Libéré, 31.08.26	Geneva aims to be a global hub for the regulation of artificial intelligence	Public Forum coverage	
RSI, 31.08.26	Geneva, the conference on computational biology	Interview with Christophe Dessimoz (SIB)	
RTS La Première, Invité de la Matinale, 31.08.26	"Switzerland is ready to collaborate with the rest of the world to ensure the reliability of AI data"	Interview with Christophe Dessimoz (SIB)	

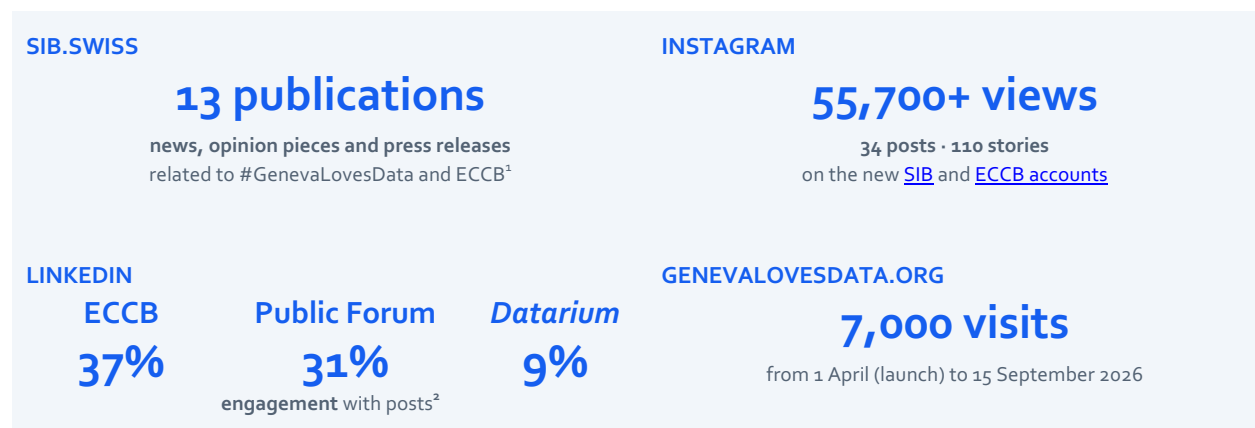
RTS, 19h30, 31.08.26	Bioinformatics, a strategic field of the life sciences in which Switzerland excels	Report with Alexandra Weber (EAWAG), Robert Waterhouse and Christophe Dessimoz (SIB)	La bioinformatique, secteur stratégique où la Suisse excelle, prend ses quartiers à Genève Rcherche scientifique Modifié le 31 août 2026 à 08:06  Alexandra Weber, cheffe du groupe Génomique de l'adaptation et de la conservation à l'Institut fédéral des sciences et technologies de la vie (ETH Zürich).
City of Geneva, 24.08.26	What if data could tell the story of life?	News item on the <i>Datarium</i> exhibition	Et si les données pouvaient raconter le vivant? Comment les données biologiques permettent-elles de mieux comprendre notre santé, notre environnement ou encore l'intelligence artificielle? L'exposition "Datarium - Genève au cœur des données du vivant" invite le public à découvrir les coulisses de cette science en plein essor. Informations pratiques L'exposition est à découvrir gratuitement au Parc des Bastions jusqu'au 19 août, puis à la Biennale de Haute-Garonne du 20 au 28 août 2026. 
Tribune de Genève, 14.08.26	From DNA to birdsong: how data catalyse innovation	Coverage of the <i>Datarium</i> exhibition featuring interviews with Christophe Dessimoz and Robert Waterhouse (SIB), and with Ozge Yuzgec (UNIGE)	De l'ADN au chant des oiseaux: comment les données catalysent l'innovation Prédire l'évolution d'une tumeur ou savoir quelles espèces protéger en priorité: derrière ces avancées, des milliards de données. Aux Bastions, une exposition révèle comment elles sont rassemblées et utilisées. 
Léman Bleu, 20.07.26	#GenevaLovesData: Geneva as a global data crossroads	Interview with Christophe Dessimoz (SIB)	#GenevaLovesData: Genève comme carrefour mondial des données 20.07.2026 17h52 Rédaction 
Le Temps, 21.07.26	Switzerland must become the world capital of trusted scientific data	Opinion piece by Christophe Dessimoz (SIB)	La Suisse doit devenir la capitale mondiale des données scientifiques de confiance OPINION. L'IA ne veut que par la qualité de ses données et la Suisse a une carte maître à jouer, écrit Christophe Dessimoz, directeur de l'Institut suisse de bioinformatique, pour qui l'excellence scientifique, la qualité, la fiabilité et la coopération de la Suisse représentent d'énormes avantages concurrentiels. 

Digital metrics

Digital visibility relied on several communities and platforms: professional and scientific networks, new Instagram channels and a dedicated website, as well as amplification by the partner network (e.g. collaborative Instagram posts with UNIGE, HUG, Geneva's Department of Economy, Employment and Energy).

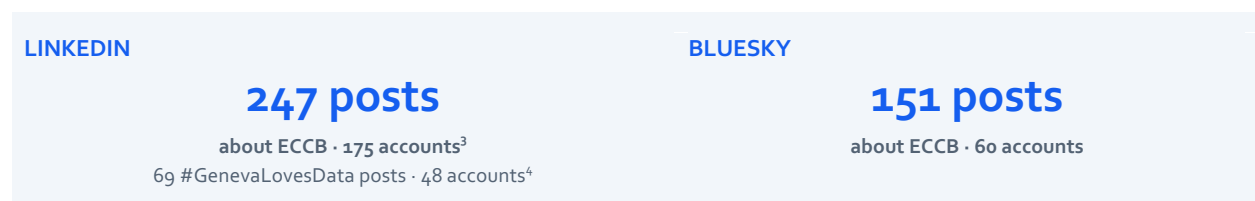
Content that mobilized audiences

Content directly linked to the initiative's highlights generated strong interest, with engagement rates on LinkedIn reaching 31% and 37% for the Public Forum and ECCB.



A global conversation

Beyond engagement with SIB content, #GenevaLovesData and ECCB were mentioned by many accounts – a sign of a conversation that spread within the scientific, institutional and partner communities.



¹See full list at the end of the report

²ECCB: 7 posts during the conference; Public Forum: 1 post; Datarium: 5 posts during the outdoor exhibition

³Number of accounts that tagged ECCB from 16 August to 15 September 2026

⁴Number of posts that tagged SIB or ECCB and included the hashtag #GenevaLovesData

Examples at cantonal and federal level

Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research EAER
23,641 followers
6d · 🌐

« Lors de la 25e Conférence européenne de biologie computationnelle à Genève, j'ai rappelé que la souveraineté numérique n'était pas le repli : c'est notre capacité à comprendre, développer, maîtriser et adapter les technologies dont nous dépendons, pour rester libres de nos choix. »

Guy Parmelin, président de la Confédération

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You and 125 others · 12 reposts

Yves Flueckiger · 2nd
Président des Académies suisses des sciences, Professe...
3w · 🌐

Un grand merci au **SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics** pour l'organisation d'une table ronde que j'ai eu le plaisir de modérer autour d'une question devenue stratégique : comment la Suisse et l'Europe peuvent-elles rester compétitives dans la course mondiale à l'IA, tout en garantissant une utilisation responsable des données et en préservant leur souveraineté ?

Merci à **Delphine Bachmann**, **Laetitia Philippe** et **Antoine Geissbuhler** pour la richesse de leurs regards croisés – cantonal, fédéral et académique.

Je retiens quatre enseignements de notre excellente conversation :

- ◆ **RESPONSABILITÉ** — Confiance, qualité et sécurité ne freinent pas l'innovation : elles peuvent devenir des facteurs de compétitivité. **State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI**
- ◆ **SOUVERAINETÉ** — Elle ne signifie pas tout faire nous-mêmes, mais conserver notre capacité de choisir : nos partenaires, nos infrastructures, nos données et nos dépendances. **Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF**
- ◆ **COMPÉTITION** — La Suisse ne gagnera pas par la taille, mais elle peut s'imposer dans des domaines ciblés par l'excellence, les talents, la qualité de ses institutions et la confiance.
- ◆ **GENÈVE** — Nous disposons ici d'un atout rare : réunir science, économie, pouvoirs publics et organisations internationales dans un même écosystème. **Département des finances, des ressources humaines et des affaires extérieures (DF)**, **Etat de Genève Département de l'instruction publique, de la formation et de la jeunesse (DIP)**, **Etat de Genève**.

À nous de transformer ces atouts en ambition pour que la Suisse reste demain un acteur, et pas seulement un utilisateur, de l'IA.

#ArtificialIntelligence #AI #Sovereignty #Data #Innovation #Switzerland
#Geneva #Science European Conference on Computational Biology (ECCB)

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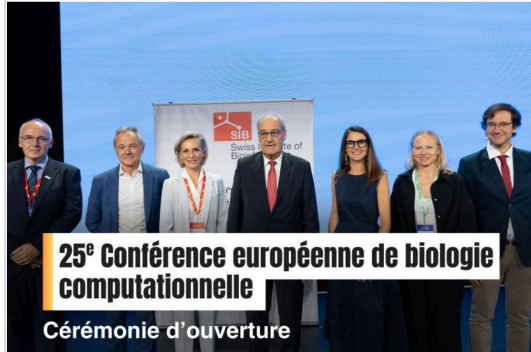
You and 61 others · 4 reposts

Etat de Genève
39,801 followers
5d · 🌐

◆ 25e Conférence européenne de biologie computationnelle ◆

Genève accueille depuis hier, 31 août, la 25e édition de la Conférence ...more

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25e Conférence européenne de biologie computationnelle
Cérémonie d'ouverture




You and 78 others · 2 comments · 14 reposts

Geneva - Economy and Innovation
13,598 followers
1w · Edited · 🌐

🌐 L'écosystème genevois des sciences de la vie mis à l'honneur à la 25e **European Conference on Computational Biology (ECCB)** !
Plus de 1'500 expertes et experts venus de 63 pays se sont réunis et ont ...more

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Jean-Pierre Pasquier · 2nd
Député au Grand Conseil de la République et canton de ...
6d · 🌐

eccb 2026 réunit à Genève les experts européens de la biologie computationnelle, des données du vivant et de l'IA appliquée à la santé et à la biodiversité.

Un rappel essentiel : des données robustes sont indispensables pour éclairer les décisions publiques en prévention, environnement et santé.

Genève confirme son rôle de plateforme scientifique internationale.

#GENEVALOVESDATA

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Diana Marek and 12 others · 2 reposts

A collective momentum

#GenevaLovesData and ECCB 2026 were made possible by the commitment of public, academic, and scientific partners. Their support and amplification made it possible to take scientific data beyond the specialist community and to create spaces for dialogue between science, policy and society.

- Financial supporters
 - o [State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI](#)
 - o [Republic and Canton of Geneva](#)
 - o [City of Geneva](#)
 - o [Geneva Tourism](#)
- Partners
 - o [University of Geneva](#)
 - o [Geneva University Hospitals](#)
 - o [BioAlps](#)
 - o [ELIXIR](#)
 - o [Swiss Personalized Health Network \(SPHN\)](#)

Contact

Marie Dangles – Director SIB, Internal & External Affairs

Marie.dangles@sib.swiss - +41 21 692 40 75

APPENDIX

List of SIB publications

Opinion pieces

- 17.09.2026 [Audrey Leuba: The quality of data is ... inseparable from the quality of science](#)
- 16.09.2026 [Anne Hiltbold: "Information and data ... are the engine of our everyday lives"](#)
- 15.09.2026 [Simone de Montmollin: "Data are now a matter of sovereignty, security and credibility"](#)
- 04.09.2026 [Swiss President Guy Parmelin: "Computational biology has become indispensable"](#)
- 30.07.2026 [Switzerland must become the world capital of trusted scientific data](#)
- 11.06.2026 [Geneva offers a powerful platform to shape global AI discussions](#)

News

- 08.10.2026 [Bringing life-science data into the public debate](#)
- 17.09.2026 [Academic, government and industry leaders stress strategic value of data](#)
- 12.08.2026 [Datarium: the data science behind health, environmental and AI advances](#)
- 09.07.2026 [Geneva to convene 1,400+ data experts at ECCB for biodiversity, AI and health](#)

Press releases

- 31.08.2026 [More than 1,500 scientists gather in Geneva to advance health, biodiversity and AI through life science data](#)
- 12.08.2026 [Behind the scenes of tomorrow's scientific discoveries: the *Datarium* exhibition in the Parc des Bastions](#)
- 15.06.2026 [This summer, Geneva becomes the capital of life science data](#)