

Campus
Lugano

6–21
August
2026

30th Summer School in Social Sciences Methods



The Summer School in Social Sciences Methods (SSM) has been held at Università della Svizzera italiana in Lugano since 2000, it is an internationally leading training program dedicated to equipping doctoral students and researchers with the cutting-edge quantitative and qualitative methodological skills necessary to conduct high-impact scholarly work. Recognising the growing complexity of empirical research across social science, the SSM offers intensive, specialised workshops led by leading international experts.

School academic direction

The school is directed by a scientific committee composed by Benedetto Lepori (USI, Lugano), Max Bergman (University of Basel), Jolanta Drezwiecka (USI, Lugano), Eugène Horber (University of Geneva), Katarina Lobinger (USI, Lugano), Colin Porlezza (USI, Lugano), Benoît Rihoux (UCL Louvain), Marco Steenbergen (University of Zurich).

The scientific committee is responsible for the overall conduct of the school for the selection of instructors and quality assessment.

Day-to-day academic management is ensured by the academic director Benedetto Lepori seconded by the program manager Agata Lambrechts.

Instructors

All instructors are faculty members at Swiss and European universities with a proved record of scholarly competences in the respective area; besides publishing methodological works, they successfully applied methods to high-level publishing.

Target public

Active researchers in social sciences, including PhD students, early career researchers and more advanced researchers wishing to upgrade their methodological skills; from universities, public research centers, and other research institutions.

Course organization and pedagogical approach

Workshops are one-week full-time (approximately *35 contact hours* across five days). The course schedule includes frontal teaching (indicatively 40% of time), group works and practical exercises (20%) and presentations by students (20%).

A core expectation is that participants actively work with data; participants are strongly encouraged to bring their data to the school to apply the new skills directly to their ongoing work. Preparatory work outside of contact time is expected before and during the course, primarily consisting of required readings and preparation for presentations.

Total course workload (including preparation, classroom time, additional time devoted to exercises) is estimated at 3 ECTS (1.5 ECTS for preparatory courses).

Assessment

The workshops do not include formal exams or graded assessments. However, participants are expected to complete in-class (and/or at-home) exercises and prepare individual or group presentations. This includes presenting core readings, performing exercises, and discussing the application of the workshop content to their own research.

Certification

Certification is issued to participants who attend all five days of the full workshops or all days of the preliminary workshop (typically two or three days). The certificate will state that the involved work is equivalent to 3 ECTS (1.5 ECTS for preparatory courses).

As attendance is mandatory for certification, any absences will be noted on the final Certificate. The Certificate, signed by the course instructor, will state that the participant has successfully completed all elements and satisfied all requirements of the workshop.

Course evaluation

All participants are requested to fill in a course evaluation form including quantitative assessment and open comments. The outcome of this evaluation is discussed by the academic director with each instructor in order to discuss issues and adapt the course contents to the needs of participants. The outcome of the evaluation is assessed by the school's scientific committee.

Fees

- Doctoral researchers: Chf 250 for preliminary workshops and Chf 800 for full workshops.
- Other researchers: Chf 250 for preliminary workshops and Chf 1200 for full workshops.

The fee covers tuition, course materials, and the networking apéro.

Registration and Payment

Registration opens in January 2026 and closes in July. Fees can be paid directly by the participants; alternatively, the school issues an invoice to the participant's institution.

More Information

Detailed programme and further information on the Summer School website www.usi.ch/ssm. Further details can also be sought via direct communication with the School Academic Director Professor Benedetto Lepori benedetto.lepori@usi.ch or School Manager Dr Agata Lambrechts agata.lambrechts@usi.ch