

# Getting involved at the heartbeat of time



Adrian Weiss fondly remembers the time of his studies at ETH Zurich.

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For Adrian Weiss it is important to get things moving during his lifetime. This is why his foundation actively supports various projects at ETH Zurich.

*How was the Adrian Weiss Foundation started?*

**Adrian Weiss** - My wife and I have no children nor family members who need financial support. For this reason it was important for us to hand something back to the community. This started by supporting various benevolent foundations and institutions. After my 70th birthday, I extended this activity and made substantial donations to about two dozen institutions. Among those were humanitarian organizations, mountain farmers, young peoples' organizations, medical research and cultural associations. When I reached age 75, I decided to give in a more focused way by establishing my own foundation in order to support ambitious projects.

*What is the purpose of your foundation?*

**Adrian Weiss** - In a nutshell, the purpose of the Adrian Weiss Foundation is to stimulate scientific and technological progress in architecture, electrical engineering and computer science.

*The scientific community is very grateful for your support. Does your activity as a donor provide you with personal benefits?*

**Adrian Weiss** - As a man with strong technological affinities, I enormously enjoy learning about the innovations I encounter regularly at ETH. I am convinced that technology improves the life of mankind - quite aside from medicine, environmental protection and culture. I want my money to be used in a responsible way, to experience

and personally guide what is achieved with it. This is why I am getting involved now, as long as I am full of life and able to follow the results of my involvement. My foundation is supposed to be used up by the time I die. By the way, I plan to reach age 95. *(laughs)*

*Focusing your foundation on architecture and electrical engineering has biographical reasons.*

**Adrian Weiss** - Indeed; I studied architecture at ETH Zurich. It was a very demanding curriculum, we often worked through the entire night. At that time, the department of architecture was located in the main downtown building. ETH gave me an excellent education that benefited me during my entire life. This is why I want to hand back something to the school. Supporting architecture involves me in the sociocultural aspects of my first profession. After having been an architect for eight years, I decided to join my father's electrical motor company. As the years went by, I took over the management of the company and its subsidiaries in Switzerland and abroad. For his "Magnetic Electric Motor" group, my father invented linear motors that are used in hospital beds, medical gear and for construction. His torque motor is used in the barriers of parking garages all over the world. By supporting electrical engineering, I want to honor my father and his tremendous innovative power. He was an alumnus of the electrical engineering department of ETH.

*How do you explain your interest in computer science?*

**Adrian Weiss** - This is where you encounter developments that could not be more exciting. Computer science truly fascinates me. With my foundation, I want to move along the heartbeat of time. Aside from that, computers have been one of my hobbies for many years. In 1980 I bought my first computer; it was followed by an AutoCAD



My education at ETH has been tremendously useful during my entire life. This is why I want to hand something back.

**Adrian Weiss**

Donor ETH Zürich

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