

Momentum for the Albert Einstein School of Public Policy

by Editors



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On 21 October 2025, ETH Zurich opened a new interdisciplinary centre aimed at strengthening the connection between science, technology and policy. It addresses a societal need that is also shared by donors.

From climate change and pandemics to armed conflicts and artificial intelligence – in light of these and other challenges, effective collaboration between science and policy is more important than ever. Against this backdrop, ETH Zurich founded the Albert Einstein School of Public Policy this autumn, in the presence of Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

The new interdisciplinary centre aims to connect science, technology and policymaking by strengthening and further developing activities in education and continuing education, research, and dialogue with policymakers and public administration. Together with various donors, the ETH Foundation is supporting the launch of the new Einstein School. Additional funding is needed to sustain the School's broad thematic scope – in Switzerland and beyond.

Broad expertise

More than 70 members from 13 departments are already involved in the Einstein School, working across six thematic areas: (1) Artificial intelligence and digitalization, (2) Environmental, energy and food systems, (3) Spatial planning and the built environment, (4) Public health, (5) Economy and innovation, and (6) Peace, conflict and security.

They work closely with existing centres and institutes in their respective fields.

High-level steering committee

The Einstein School is led by Tobias Schmidt, Professor of Energy and Technology Policy at ETH Zurich. Schmidt is supported by a management board composed of five additional members: Dominik Hangartner, Professor of Public Policy, serves as Head of Teaching and Continuing Education. Robert Finger, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Policy, jointly oversees the School's research activities together with Tanja Stadler, Professor of Computational Evolution. Former Federal Chancellor Walter Thurnherr heads the Strategy and Policy Dialogue area as Professor of Practice. Benedikt Knüsel, Head of the Science-Policy Interface unit, will be the school's executive director.

interview with Tobias Schmidt

interview with Walter Thurnherr

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