Your support for new talent: Impact Report 2022

Funding outstanding young researchers. For industry, science and society.
Many thanks!

It is thanks to your generosity that ETH Zurich has been able to steadily increase its funding to talented young people in recent years. Last academic year, for example, we were pleased to award Excellence Scholarships to almost 50 outstanding Master’s students. And since student numbers are on the rise, we would like to use your donations to award more of these scholarships in the near future. Also last year, our ETH needs-based scholarships helped around 400 students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to study at ETH – a major step in our efforts to advance equal opportunity. And finally, backing from the Pioneer Fellowship programme in 2021 enabled nine young researchers to follow their entrepreneurial ambitions. This programme is a key pillar in driving entrepreneurship at ETH and strongly bolsters our position as a hub of innovation.

As an illustration of how an excellent student can develop into a dynamic young entrepreneur, and the role that your support plays in the process, we present the example of Nicole Kleger. You can read about her journey on the following pages. And, just as ETH’s funding instruments are all connected for a common purpose, our aim is to bring student and entrepreneurial initiatives closer together too – and that in literal terms, hence our plans for a “Centre for Students and Entrepreneurs”. ETH is convinced of the importance and potential impact of this centre and is pulling out all the stops to make it happen. Stories on this and more follow in this report – we hope you enjoy reading it!

Günther Dissertori
Rector

Vanessa Wood
Vice President for Knowledge Transfer and Corporate Relations
Two materials scientists are up for the challenge

The idea for their startup had long been on their minds. With donor funding to back the project, Nicole Kleger and Simona Fehlmann are evolving from researchers into young entrepreneurs – and facing an explosive learning curve in the process.

By funding new talent at ETH Zurich, you support ...

... outstanding Master’s students from Switzerland and abroad: Excellence Scholars

Our country depends on first-class specialists. By attracting exceptional young people from Switzerland and around the world to study for a Master’s degree at ETH Zurich, the Excellence Scholarship & Opportunity Programme (ESOP) is an essential instrument in the competition for the world’s greatest talent. Each year, the scholarships are awarded to students ranking among the top two to three percent of their year. They receive a scholarship of CHF 48,000, which covers their study and living costs during their entire Master’s programme. Due to the increasing number of students, the demand for Excellence Scholarships has grown: the goal is to be able to award 60 Excellence Scholarships per year.

... bright minds with limited financial resources: needs-based scholarship holders

For some young people, the dream of studying at ETH is only possible with a scholarship. Around 400 people are supported in this way every year, the requirements being that they provide regular proof of their academic progress and that they complete their studies within a reasonable period of time. The ETH needs-based scholarships ensure that no one is excluded from studying at ETH on the basis of their financial situation if they have all the necessary qualifications. This is all the more important as ETH studies are time-consuming and often do not allow students to pursue a part-time job. Society as a whole benefits from the programme because it enables more highly qualified and sought-after specialists to be trained.

... budding young entrepreneurs with drive and ambition: Pioneer Fellows

For young scientists, it is often a long and rocky road from the initial idea to creating a marketable product. After all, setting up your own company requires not only courage but also sufficient seed capital, a strong network and access to urgently needed infrastructure. That is why a jury of experts awards 10 to 15 Pioneer Fellowships every year. ETH Zurich would like to further expand the programme so that even more young ambitious researchers can receive up to CHF 150,000, coaching sessions and the opportunity to develop their research to the point of commercial application. The aim is to bring highly innovative products and services of societal value to market as quickly as possible.

“It gives me great pride to fund outstanding talent at ETH Zurich with my annual donation.”

André Dahinden, Excellence Scholarships donor
Long-standing donors may recognise her name: Nicole Kleger completed her Master’s degree as an ETH Excellence Scholar. In a portrait in ETH Foundation’s Uplift magazine, she hinted in 2020 that she could imagine founding a startup after completing her doctoral degree. The young woman is well on course: at the beginning of 2022, ETH Zurich reported that Nicole Kleger and her colleague Simona Fehlmann were two of seven newly funded young entrepreneurs. A jury of experts had awarded them a Pioneer Fellowship, providing them with seed capital and mentoring to pave the way to a market-ready product. Time for a reunion.

We meet the two materials scientists on the Hönggerberg campus, which is also where their paths first crossed: Nicole Kleger was supervising Simona Fehlmann’s Master’s thesis. As Pioneer Fellows they are still allowed to use ETH infrastructure, in their case that of Professor André Studart’s Complex Materials group. With their system named ‘sallea’, the two women dedicatedly each day to drive their entrepreneurial project forward. The idea: to decouple the 3D printing process from the material by means of templates made of 3D-printed salt, which serve as an intermediate step. The idea has practical relevance because many materials cannot be 3D-printed directly. However, being able to produce small, complex structures from these materials – which 3D printing enables, in contrast to traditional manufacturing processes – would be extremely useful for numerous applications. A concrete example? Bone augmentation in the jaw area: before a dental implant can be inserted, it is often necessary to build up the bone. Sallea’s process makes it possible to produce magnesium with structured porosity, thereby rendering magnesium implants conceivable for bone reconstruction: magnesium promotes bone growth and the body can break down the magnesium and absorb it as a mineral, eliminating the need to remove the implants by surgery.

Many high-performance materials are not directly 3D printable. Sallea’s workaround enables complex lattice structures to be made from these materials too.

Smart start

However, launching new products in the strictly regulated medical market is highly demanding. Nicole Kleger and Simona Fehlmann estimate that this could take up to ten years for their implants. In order not to fail at the first hurdle of this Herculean task, the two women will start with a simpler entry-level product: three-dimensional cell cultures. In such cultures, cells can grow in all three dimensions and interact with their environment. Pharmaceutical research is one area in which these products are applied. Transferability to organisms or tissue is higher with 3D models than with 2D models, which is why the former have been booming for several years: “The market for 3D cell cultures is growing by 30 per cent every year,” says Simona Fehlmann. Scaffolds are often used for their cultivation. “In the next few months, our main task will be to find industrial partners who will work with us to further develop the materials and geometries of these scaffolds in detail, allowing the cell cultures to grow better than with conventional scaffolds,” Simona Fehlmann continues. The two materials scientists are convinced that their method offers great opportunities in this field. And, according to Nicole Kleger: “The better 3D cell cultures become, the fewer animal experiments and clinical studies with humans will be necessary.”

“A materials science startup has it both harder and easier, say, a mechanical engineering startup,” explains Nicole Kleger. “In mechanical engineering, the concrete application in question is often already part of the idea. We, by contrast, have to ask ourselves where we can use our material to solve the greatest problem.” On the other hand, it’s not so dramatic for us when a door closes because there are plenty of other doors potentially worth knocking on. “We have a clear focus, but also a plan B, C and D.” The range of sectors they foresee even includes aerospace. Simona Fehlmann, who has already done two practicals at Beyond Gravity (formerly RUAG Space), sees potential here for customarily strong but lighter components.

Grateful to role models

In the past few months, the two women behind sallea have been hurried out of their comfort zone. In conducting market analyses, creating business plans and seeking funding, they have both faced a steep learning curve, Simona Fehlmann says. One key advantage is the fact that the Complex Materials group boasts a far above-average number of spin-offs: Spectroplast, FenX, Microcaps and NematX are all successful examples. “We’ve spent hours with Manuel Schaffner from Spectroplast discussing the dos and don’ts around applying for funding, specific questions we had on patent applications, how to find investors, and so on,” says Nicole Kleger. She continues: “It’s really nice to experience how much support you get in the startup ecosystem, how much time all these busy people take, even when you can’t pay a consulting fee.” At this point, Nicole Kleger refers to the upcoming Centre for Students and Entrepreneurs, destined to be a new hotspot for innovation on the ETH Hönggerberg campus: “Not all ETH graduates with entrepreneurial ambitions have this proximity to other startups like we do, and from which we draw such benefit. For this reason, I see the Centre as a project of enormous value for driving entrepreneurship at ETH.” However, as females, the entrepreneurs cannot count on benefitting from role models everywhere. Nicole Kleger hopes that the current buzz around female founders will make a difference: “It’s good to see that there are an increasing number of advisory services for female founders. Unfortunately, however, investors are still more reluctant to act, even though startups founded by women are proven to report higher revenue figures.” The mother of two also points out a blind spot in the system: “If there are to be more female founders with families, funding programmes must also address the topic of childcare support.”

“Emboldened by donors

The two greatly appreciate the support sallea receives from all those who fund the Pioneer Fellowship programme through the ETH Foundation. Nicole Kleger points out: “What we’re doing needs a lot of grit and stamina. Without people who believe in us, it wouldn’t work. Talks like the ones I have with people at ETH Foundation events such as Meet the Talent embolden me and give me strength for whatever is to come.”
“I’m surprised that this hasn’t been around for a long time!”

For several years now the Dätwyler Stiftung in Altdorf has been funding projects at ETH Zurich. Having recently started to include young researchers too, managing director Susanne Döhnert explains why the entire Alpine arc is set to benefit.

Why does the Dätwyler Stiftung support research and teaching at ETH Zurich?
Firstly, ETH is a renowned national institution of key importance to research and teaching in Switzerland. It researches and works on topics that are also of great relevance to the canton of Uri. Secondly, our two founders, brothers Peter and Max Dätwyler, studied at ETH. Finally, Dätwyler Holding Inc., which used to belong to the founding Dätwyler family, is always in need of highly qualified specialists. This is why we’d like the name Dätwyler to be a presence at ETH, even though we’ve always been independent of the company.

After ETH Week 2019, the foundation chose to support the Pioneer Fellowship shared by Dominic Jud and Burak Çizmeci. What was it about the two young entrepreneurs’ project that convinced you?
There’s clearly an enormous demand for remote-controlled excavators and other construction machines. Here in the canton of Uri, we don’t need to be convinced of that: there are rockfall areas and exposed alpine roads or inaccessible paths in the mountain forests that need to be maintained. It would be invaluable to have dangerous work in unreachable terrain – resulting from natural disasters, for example – carried out from a safe distance. Remote-controlled and semi-autonomous construction machines would be of enormous benefit not only to us in Uri, but to all mountain cantons and, with the effects of climate change, the urgency of such solutions is set to rise.

In our digital world, I’m surprised that this hasn’t been around for a long time! But apparently such a challenge could only be met by the expertise of the two ETH Pioneers, using augmented reality and their sophisticated technology from the Robotic Systems Lab. When you run a foundation, it’s important that not only the project but also the people involved align with the foundation’s purpose. Because of our history, the Dätwyler Stiftung has a strong entrepreneurial spirit. In this respect, Dominic Jud and Burak Çizmeci are a perfect fit for us.

How is the exchange between the foundation and the researchers?
The relationship to a project is completely different when you get to know the people behind it. The exchange with the two young researchers is both fascinating and refreshing. They’re fully immersed in the topic and know their subject inside out. We also valued the fact that the project’s proof of concept was carried out in Sisikon, i.e. on Uri ground. The rockfall on the Axenstrasse last year provided the perfect opportunity to combine research with real clean-up work.

Are there any other topics of importance to the canton of Uri that you could imagine funding at ETH in the future?
Basically, research on natural events and natural hazards – anything to do with mountains, tunnels and rocks – is relevant to us and worthy of funding. In addition, the topic should be scalable to other cantons and countries, ideally to the entire Alpine arc. This is why we intend to remain in dialogue with ETH.

“For climate change, the urgency of solutions like those offered by remote-controlled construction machines is set to rise.”
Susanne Döhnert, managing director Dätwyler Stiftung

Pioneer Fellows Dominic Jud and Burak Çizmeci want to bring remote-controlled and semi-autonomous construction machines to the market. Initial test trials (pictured in Sisikon) have been promising.
Aurel Neff and Patrick Barton: laser-based weeding robot

In current agricultural practices, the only alternative to herbicides is a combination of mechanical hoeing and manual weeding. When it comes to scalable organic farming, technologies are needed that greatly reduce the use of manual labour. With its laser-based approach, the Caterra robot enables the removal of weeds growing at close proximity to the plants.

Young entrepreneurs currently receiving funding

**Martin Hofmann**  
X14 foods: plant-based steaks from pea protein

The materials scientist has developed a process with which plant-based steaks can be produced from pea protein and fat. He is primarily targeting people who, like himself, are not vegetarians but want to reduce their meat consumption.

**Severin Eder and Lukas Böcker**  
Sustainable alternatives to food from the ocean

Sustainable alternatives to fish and seafood are needed to counteract ocean overfishing. Severin Eder and Lukas Böcker have designed an innovative process to produce high-quality plant-based products with structures and nutrients matching those of seafood. A contribution to sustainable nutrition.

**Bernhard Kratzwald**  
ethonAI: pro-active quality management for manufacturing systems

In modern manufacturing systems, defective products make up around 15 per cent of the entire operating costs. As systems become increasingly complex, detecting these defects early in the process is a major challenge. ethonAI uses artificial intelligence methods to develop a powerful quality management platform that will soon enable quality defects to be detected and prevented in real time.

**Bettina Müller**  
Nimble: an instrument to better assess skin condition

The young entrepreneur has developed an ultralight device that can distinguish between diseased and healthy tissue on a microscopic level. The potential applications are manifold: due to its manageability, it can serve as a diagnostic instrument for the early detection of skin diseases or in the cosmetics industry to examine the effects of skin care products.

**Mauro Häusler**  
Spektrum: structural monitoring of rock slopes

Nowadays, unstable rock slopes are investigated by measuring earth surface motions with procedures like radar. However, critical modifications at depth may be overlooked. Spektrum technology is designed to detect the environmental vibrations of potentially unstable slopes and rocks. The technology can be used to monitor problematic slopes in real time and conduct initial investigations of suspect slopes.

**Alexandre Anthis**  
AnastoSEAL: a smart patch that fixes surgical leaks

Every year, up to 14 million people worldwide undergo abdominal surgery. During these operations, tissue is stitched together or closed with staples. In about ten percent of cases, the stitching breaks open after surgery, allowing gastric or intestinal fluid to leak into the surrounding tissue, a deterioration that can often be life-threatening. AnastoSEAL is a suture and staple sealant patch that stays adhered under the toughest conditions.

**Lukas Ambühl**  
Transcality: digital traffic twins for cities

The aim of smart cities is to consume as few resources as possible while providing the population with a high standard of life quality. In this project, the data obtained from the wide use of sensors is used to create realistic traffic models that can improve mobility concepts. Using artificial intelligence methods, Transcality creates digital traffic twins that can map a city’s entire traffic system in real time.

**Aurel Neff**  
Caterra: laser-based weeding robot

In current agricultural practices, the only alternative to herbicides is a combination of mechanical hoeing and manual weeding. When it comes to scalable organic farming, technologies are needed that greatly reduce the use of manual labour. With its laser-based approach, the Caterra robot enables the removal of weeds growing at close proximity to the plants.
Dream job as a startup founder

Riccardo Feingold has a clear goal in mind: to found his own startup. Thanks to an ETH scholarship, he is able to study mechanical engineering and build the skillset he needs.

“I am hugely motivated by the idea of solving a problem and simplifying everyone’s life through technology and creativity, and I want to make this vision come true with my own startup. I’m currently exploring various ideas in the fields of robotics, biomedicine and data protection and chose my studies with this objective in mind. The mechanical engineering programme is wide and I can build my knowledge in many areas, from programming to materials science to quantum mechanics. I’m currently working on the basic framework for my startup idea and hope to have designed a prototype by the end of my Bachelor’s course. My scholarship is a stroke of luck and I’m very grateful that it enables me to study at ETH. The university offers a great environment for my ambitions as a young entrepreneur. Lectures on innovation processes or efficient teamwork and events organised by the Entrepreneur Club provide me with valuable inputs that will help me realise my dream. One of my favourite places at ETH is the Student Project House; there I can hone prototypes, try out new technologies and network with students from other disciplines who also have ambitious aspirations.”

Success of ETH scholarships 2021/22

390 young people supported with a needs-based scholarship including students from Ukraine funded from additional means

“Bright individuals with ambitions also come from homes with limited financial resources. Society cannot afford to ignore this talent. We must do everything within our power to support them.”

Maurice Thornton
Managing director headcount AG
The fact that Xenia Voellmy is studying at ETH is mainly due to her brother: in her first Bachelor's degree in mathematics, dance and theatre studies, she missed the practical relevance. At the time, her brother was studying mechanical engineering and working on the Scalevo project, a venture in which he co-developed the prototype of Scowo, the stair-climbing wheelchair. Xenia Voellmy was intrigued by the idea of being able to test her knowledge in practice while still studying and work on solutions to major problems at the same time – and enrolled for a second Bachelor's degree.

Technology for clean rivers

Xenia Voellmy is now working on her Master's thesis and on the student project Autonomous River Cleanup, or ARC. Along with 25 students and postdocs from various disciplines and universities, she's aiming to develop technical solutions to combat water pollution in line with the initiative launched in 2019. The team receives support from ETH as well as from various companies and foundations in the form of access to infrastructure, material and financial resources. “Once waste has arrived in the sea, it becomes difficult to remove it. That’s why we’re starting with rivers,” Xenia Voellmy explains. In 2021, the group was able to trial the technologies for the first time in a realistic environment: on a floating platform in the Limmat, they tested the measures they believe will efficiently remove waste from bodies of water. The equipment includes a camera mounted on a bridge that records the amount and composition of waste in the river, an underwater barrier of air bubbles that transports the waste to the platform, a conveyor belt that takes the material out of the water, and robotic arms fitted with a camera that then sort the waste by material and let the biomass roll back into the water.

Xenia Voellmy is now dedicating her Master's thesis to the sorting mechanism. “Automatic recognition makes it easy to sort and reuse recyclables. This creates a financial incentive for removing the waste,” the aspiring mechanical engineer explains. She wants to find out how the algorithm can be trained so that even silty and wet objects can be correctly identified. In addition, the mechanism must be developed to work in a small space and become more mobile. The idea is that a shipping container equipped with a conveyor belt and robotic arms will be able to transport the system to places where river pollution is a major problem, such as Southeast Asia or India.

A positive impact on the world

The fact that Xenia Voellmy can commit herself to a passion project like ARC while studying at the same time is only possible thanks to an Excellence Scholarship: “To finance my Bachelor’s degree, I worked part-time. Now being able to fully concentrate on my studies and ARC means a lot to me,” the young woman says. She also appreciates the chance to meet with donors, visit companies and network with other Excellence Scholars. “Since our last meeting, two of them have started coming to jazz dance with me,” the student laughs.

What she will do after graduation is still open. Possible options include volunteering abroad, working on a spin-off related to the ARC project or entering industry. Xenia Voellmy, who is also politically active in calling for solutions to climate change, says: “First and foremost, I want to give something back and have a positive impact on the world.”
Strong impact

**Talent in action in Mozambique**

Easy Housing is a circular concept for creating prefabricated, affordable and scalable housing from sustainable resources. Excellence Scholar Josien de Koning, a Master's student in integrated building systems at ETH Zurich, spent the Spring semester of 2022 in Mozambique. Her aim was to help Easy Housing develop its concept and streamline the entire workflow through digitalisation and automation. This was a logical step for the scholar, who is convinced that when it comes to making a difference in the building sector, the greatest impact can be achieved where the most construction is taking place, namely in Africa and Asia.

**Excellence Scholar wins at Swiss Art Awards**

Just one year after completing her studies in architecture at ETH Zurich, former Excellence Scholar Anna MacIver-Ek and her partner Axel Chevroulet won the architecture category of the Swiss Art Award 2021 presented by the Federal Office of Culture. The idea behind their installation Deliberate Leak was to move the Swiss Art Awards entrance away from Basel’s Messeplatz and create a new public entrance accessed from the city side.

**Data science talent at work at ETH**

Excellence Scholar Tabea Donauer works on a voluntary basis for Hack4Good, an eight-week programme that matches talented data science students from ETH Zurich with non-profit organisations. Over this period, small student teams work in close collaboration with the selected organisation to develop and implement data-driven solutions designed to promote its social cause. Tabea Donauer’s own professional interest is the question of how geodata analysis helps solve environmental problems.

**ETH founder enters the health insurance market**

A milestone for 2014 Pioneer Fellow Sabrina Badir: in 2021, Sanitas became the first insurance company in Switzerland to announce that it will cover the costs of a preventive medical check-up with Pregnolia technology for clients with the corresponding supplementary insurance. CSS has followed suit. Sabrina Badir’s product is a measuring device designed to improve medical care during pregnancy: by determining the stiffness of the cervix, the device enables health care providers to detect the risk of premature birth at an early stage.

**High-flying partnership for spin-off Synhelion**

Swiss, a member of the Lufthansa Group has concluded a strategic collaboration with ETH donor-funded spin-off Synhelion to bring its solar aviation fuel to market. This will make Swiss the first airline in the world to use ‘sun-to-liquid’ fuel. The process developed by Synhelion uses concentrated sunlight to produce carbon-neutral kerosene. With this collaboration, Swiss and Synhelion are playing a pioneering role in the production and adoption of sustainable aviation fuels.

**Former Pioneer Fellowship acquired by Sensirion**

Sensirion, a world-leading provider of sensors and sensor solutions and originally an ETH spin-off, has taken over IRsweep. The acquisition is intended to enable the long-term development of cost-effective sensor solutions based on optical measurement principles. IRsweep was founded in 2014 by two Pioneer Fellows Andreas Hugi and Markus Geiser and their colleague Markus Mangold. Sensirion and IRsweep are shining examples of how spin-offs from ETH enhance Switzerland’s position as a centre of innovation and create jobs for highly qualified specialists.

**Strong impact**

Synhelion is currently testing its sun-to-liquid technology on an industrial scale on the solar tower of the German Aerospace Center (DLR) in Jülich, Germany.
1918
AI Scholarship
19

researching at ETH today will become a standard tool for people in a few decades. I also find the topic of learning itself incredibly exciting. We as humans don’t even understand ourselves how we learn! For example, we want a self-driving car to drive well – but what does ‘drive well’ mean? And how can we formulate this mathematically? We quickly reach our limitations because we don’t really know how we do this ourselves. That’s why in machine learning we work with examples; this is good driving, this is bad driving. We’ve seen that we get much further with this approach.

The scholarship includes a mentorship with someone from Apple. Who is that with you? Brian Amberg, who heads a research department at Apple in Zurich. We have regular video calls and Brian asks me how things are going. He originally owned a startup that was bought by Apple. I’m very interested in his ideas on entrepreneurship.

“IT’S LIKE BUILDING A ROCKET”

Since 2020, Apple has been funding the research of outstanding doctoral students in artificial intelligence and machine learning across the world, including at ETH Zurich. Jonas Rothfuss is an Apple Scholar 2021/22.

You’ve been studying for a doctoral degree with computer science professor Andreas Krause since 2019. In 2021 you were made an Apple Scholar – what did that mean for you? The most important thing for me was the practical. In order to place me in the right team, my contact person at Apple asked me which mathematical methods I wanted to explore. I was interested in reinforcement learning, which is the mathematical equivalent of what humans or animals do when they learn through trial and error, through positive and negative feedback. Algorithms can also learn like this.

What can you tell us about your practical at Apple in Zurich? Many things are subject to confidentiality. In the beginning, I didn’t know either what my team was actually working on. What I can say is that I found it really cool! It was a very different experience from the academic world. Just the scale of the research project itself: there are hundreds of people worldwide working together towards one goal, and the time horizon spans 10 years. The spirit is not competitive, which is how I experience the university environment, but collaborative. It’s a bit like building a rocket at NASA: you either win together or get fired together. I was an equal team member, and was often asked how I would tackle this or that mathematical problem.

What fascinates you about artificial intelligence and machine learning? We are an auxiliary science, designing methods that can be applied to many different disciplines. This means we can make a big impact – in medication research, climate research or in the field of mobility. Just as I use algorithms ten times a day that were developed by researchers ten, twenty or even thirty years ago, I hope that what we’re researching at ETH today will become a standard tool for people in a few decades. I also find the topic of learning itself incredibly exciting. We as humans don’t even understand ourselves how we learn! For example, we want a self-driving car to drive well – but what does ‘drive well’ mean? And how can we formulate this mathematically? We quickly reach our limitations because we don’t really know how we do this ourselves. That’s why in machine learning we work with examples; this is good driving, this is bad driving. We’ve seen that we get much further with this approach.

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Many thanks!

Talented individuals at ETH Zurich receive substantial backing from committed private individuals and partners. We would also like to thank all those supporters who are not mentioned by name but who, together, have enabled great things to happen.

Pioneer Pledge

With a Pioneer Pledge, young entrepreneurs from ETH Zurich make a non-binding pledge to engage in philanthropic activity for ETH. Founders like Lukas Böni from Planted or Michael Hagander from Microcaps thereby declare their support for an interconnected and sustainable startup scene at ETH.

“ETH Zurich’s Pioneer Fellowship played a pivotal role in enabling us to create a successful company from our research. I’m delighted to now be in a position to fund talented individuals at ETH too.”

Mattias Ivarsso, co-founder Inositec (acquired by Vifor Pharma in 2022)

The joy of giving back:

- 62 former Excellence Scholars and 9 former Pioneer Fellows are now ETH donors.

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- SWF Stiftung für wissenschaftliche Forschung
- Swiss fF Foundation
- Veronika und Hugo Bohny Stiftung
- Zuger Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft

In remembrance

We also remember with gratitude all those who have supported outstanding talent by drawing up a bequest, legacy or funeral donation:

- Margrit Anliker-Rüedi (d.)
- Robert Bleibler (d.)
- Ulrich Bremi (d.)
- Peter Buser (d.)
- Renata Ehrenbold (d.)
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Many thanks to all other 6000 donors and partners.
New hotspot for talent

Support from donors enables a vibrant hub for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship to be set up on the Hönggerberg campus.

A centre of exchange and collaboration in which creative students and the ETH entrepreneurial community can fuel each other’s ideas and come together in new projects: this is the vision for the Centre for Students and Entrepreneurs. Talented and driven individuals, all creating innovations designed to make a sustainable difference to the world of tomorrow, are to be united under one roof. Thanks to generous support from UBS as a major partner, as well as many other organisations and countless committed private individuals who all believe in the significance and potential influence of the Centre for Students and Entrepreneurs, the realisation of the centre is drawing ever closer: 25 million Swiss francs has already been raised! For the project to be completed, further partners and donors are needed to raise the remaining 15 million Swiss francs required.

Building is scheduled to start in 2025. Provided the remaining funding can be secured, this hub for young creative energy will be open for operation in 2028. Generations of young researchers and entrepreneurs will then have the opportunity to gather a range of experiences beyond their curriculum, expand their network and drive promising technological solutions forward. This meeting point for industry and society will make an important contribution to boosting ETH’s status as a centre of education and innovation and to strengthening Zurich, and Switzerland as a whole, as a hub of industry and innovation.

“With this partnership, we aim to boost the long-term development of entrepreneurship and innovative capabilities in Switzerland, and to promote the next generation of entrepreneurs.”

Sabine Keller-Busse, President UBS Switzerland