“Excellence is about more than the highest grades and distinguished diplomas, it is about striving towards truly understanding science and technology, having a critical mind, seeing the broader societal and cultural context, experiencing the industrial practice, and above all passion. The ESOP scholars are set out to do just that. For these reasons and more Dow Europe GmbH is a great supporter of the programme. To those who are not yet supporting ESOP I strongly advise to do so as the talent available will make a difference for your company in the years to come.”

Dr Rudy Koopmans, Research Fellow Corporate R&D, Dow Europe GmbH

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR PARTNERS


HIGHLIGHT STUDENTS EMBRACE PARTNERS’ INVITE FOR INTERNSHIPS AND VISITS

Corporate partners to the ETH Excellence Scholarship & Opportunity Programme (ESOP) appreciate the potential access they have to the scholars and browse this special talent pool to establish future work relationships. ESOP scholars also benefit significantly from this contact. Take for example Paris Papakonstantinou, 2012 ESOP scholar from the Management, Technology and Economics Department (D-MTEC) who spent an internship in the Supply Chain Department of Dow Europe GmbH, a subsidiary of the US Dow Chemical Company: “Dow is an excellent learning environment. There were lots of opportunities to develop personally and professionally as I met so many interesting people who were willing to share their experience”. Paris actually suggested to introduce a mentoring programme for scholars with tutors from the corporate world: “The discussions I had with Dr Rudy Koopmans, R&D EMEA at Dow Europe, were immensely helpful for me. I wish I had such discussions at the beginning of my university study, I might have focused a little better on what is really relevant to my career”. On top of the popular bi-annual group excursions, the customized exchange between corporate partners and scholars is a development well received by all parties.
The scholarship helped me to follow a continuous, constraint-free study plan. As a donor I can now give back to ETH Zurich and enjoy the same benefits and advantages that I was privileged to enjoy years ago.

The ESOP scholarship offered a financial relief that allowed me to concentrate on my studies and combine technical know-how with practical applications and on-the-job trainings.

The scholarship gave me the possibility to start my scientific career at one of the top universities and realising my dream of contributing to state-of-the-art research.

ETZ ZÜRICH FOUNDATION | AUGUST 2014

HIGHLIGHT: EMPOWERING THE BRIGHTEST MINDS

In the upcoming fall semester, the Excellence Scholarship & Opportunity Programme (ESOP) will support 45 highly qualified and talented Master students to develop their academic and personal skill-set and help them find their way into society. More than half of this year’s excellence scholars hold a Bachelor degree from ETH Zurich (53%). About one third is Swiss (33%), the remaining talents followed the university’s renowned excellent teaching and research facilities from different parts of the world. The programme, which has entered its seventh year of existence, is mainly funded by donations.

Once every year, ETH Zurich spreads its call for excellent scholars internationally. The selection is highly competitive and only the best students from the Bachelor cohort with a convincing proposal for their Master thesis pass the application process. An accreditation committee at each of the 16 ETH Zurich departments pre-selects two to five candidates depending on the size of the respective department. Key to this process is a personal interview with the candidate. Subsequently, a dedicated ESOP commission oversees the entire process and prepares the final choice of candidates for approval by the Rector.

HIGHLIGHT: NEW HEAD OF ESOP

Sara Springman, Professor for Geotechnical Engineering, becomes the new Rector as of January 2015 and, in this function, ensures educational excellency of the technical university and heads the Excellence Scholarship Programme. The British national studied Engineering Sciences at the University of Cambridge, UK, and became professor at ETH Zurich in 1997 where she has focused her research on geotechnical problems relating to soil-structure-interaction and natural hazards. Dedicated to triathlon in her spare time she was honoured by the Queen with the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Since 2007, ESOP has become a well established prestigious programme attracting talents from across the world.

8 former ESOP scholars today support the programme as donors

233 scholars

29 male scholars

16 female scholars

45 new scholars in 2014

33% Swiss

HIGHLIGHT: ANIMESH TRIVEDI

27-year old Animesh from India became an ESOP scholar in 2007 to conduct his Master studies in Computer Science (D-INFK) at ETH Zurich. Today he does his PhD thesis at the IBM Research Lab in Zurich where he designs the next generation of distributed data processing architectures.

29-year old Lukas from Switzerland was an ESOP scholar in 2009 to conduct his Master studies at the ETH Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering (D-BAUG) on shell structures under gravity loads for which he was awarded numerous prizes: the Willi-Studer Prize, the ETH Medal and the Holcim Concrete Prize. Lukas is a research and teaching assistant at the D-BAUG Institute of Structural Engineering and until recently worked for the firm Dr. Schwartz Consulting.

26-year old Manuel from Germany conducted his ESOP-supported Master studies at the ETH Department of Mechanical and Process Engineering (D-MAVT) in 2011 and wrote a thesis for which he received the ETH Medal in 2014. Today he is a doctoral student working on a joint project of the ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich on improving the treatment of hydrocephalus, an abnormal accumulation of fluids in brain cavities, by developing a smart shunt.

26-year old Sara from Switzerland became an ESOP scholar in 2011 to finish her studies in neurophysiology (D-BIOL) at the Institute for Neuroinformatics, a joint body of ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich. Her thesis led to two first-author publications. Recently, Sara started her PhD project on tadpoles at the Ludwig Maximilians-Universität in Munich.

23-year old Martin from Austria entered the Excellence Scholarship Programme last year to finish his Master studies in chemistry at the ETH Department of Chemistry and Applied Biosciences (D-CHAB). In the future he aims to combine his research interest in medicinal and analytical chemistry with skills in economics, which he would like to acquire on-the-job – and potentially during PhD studies – in the pharmaceutical industry.

23-year old Tyeler from Canada became an ESOP scholar in 2013 to conduct her Master studies on the carbon financing potential of biogas at the Department of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering (D-ITET). She applied for a scholarship because of ETH Zurich’s internationally respected reputation and commitment to contributing to sustainable energy solutions.

HIGHLIGHT: SARA HÄNZI

25-year old Sara from Switzerland started her PhD project on tadpoles at the Ludwig Maximilians-Universität in Munich.

25-year old Tyeler from Canada

Reporting EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP & OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMME

SHUNTING BRAIN CAVITIES

By developing a smart shunt, 26-year old Sara from Switzerland aims to improve the treatment of hydrocephalus, an abnormal accumulation of fluids in brain cavities.

STUDYING AT ETH ZURICH

Studying at ETH Zurich opens the door for me to work worldwide in emissions reduction projects that promote renewable energy using market-based strategies.

ANIMESH TRIVEDI

Through the Excellence Scholarship I met many interesting people and companies, which may well play a vital role in my future work life.

MARTIN GAUGG

Founded in 1997, the Excellence Scholarship Programme (ESOP) is a well-established and prestigious programme attracting talents from across the world. Since 2007, ESOP has supported 45 scholars with a mean age of 27 years to pursue Master’s degrees at ETH Zurich.

Programme manager Martin Gaugg explains how the programme works and how graduates can benefit from the programme.

MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

The programme addresses modern technologies like big data and artificial intelligence. Many ESOP scholars work in the high-tech industry; 26-year-old Lukas, a PhD student in structural engineering, is conducting research in the IBM Research Lab in Zurich.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Excellence Scholarship Programme is also committed to sustainability goals, as 23-year-old Tyeler from Canada is working on the carbon financing potential of biogas at the Department of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering (D-ITET).

The Excellence Scholarship Programme is a key component of ETH Zurich’s internationalization strategy and has become a well-established and prestigious programme.