

ETH zürich



life

ETH community magazine
September 2016

**At the heart
of the Cybathlon**

CYBATHLON

kihzh Foundation

More flexibility for parents



As of 1 September 2016, the childcare facilities provided by the kihzh Foundation include a new supervised playroom. At "kihzh Flex", qualified staff look after children aged between 4 months and 7 years on an hourly basis. The pilot project will run for a year in the HWO building on the Höggerberg campus.

www.kihzh.ch/kihzh_flex →

Childcare grants

Robert Gnehm grants for parents attending conferences

ETH Zurich now offers grants of up to 3,000 francs to doctoral and postdoctoral students with children younger than 18 months if they have to pay additional childcare costs to present their research at a conference. Applications for Robert Gnehm grants are to be submitted to the Equal! office by 1 November, 1 February or 1 June of each year.

equal@sl.ethz.ch →

Key figure

0.0000000000000002

Light has wave properties, and one wave corresponds to just 2 femtoseconds. The NCCR MUST, the interdisciplinary research programme which studies ultrafast processes like this, is holding an exhibition entitled *A Journey into Time in Powers of Ten* on the Höggerberg campus from 19 September to 19 December 2016, where visitors will experience time scales ranging from 10^{-16} to 10^{18} seconds.

Zurich City University District

Dialogue with Oberstrass quarter

On 23 August 2016, ETH Vice President Ulrich Weidmann and a number of other specialists took part in a dialogue event for the Oberstrass quarter of Zurich, where they explained ETH's plans and construction projects for the Zurich City University District. Along with a new building on the Schmelzberg site, which is due to be completed in 2022 at the earliest, construction of the new GLC research building is also under way. In addition, the ML/FHK building complex will undergo refurbishment starting this autumn.

www.ethz.ch/internaktuell →

In memoriam

A sad farewell

We are deeply saddened to announce that Diethelm Würtz and Barbara Schröder-Würtz died in a tragic car accident at the end of July 2016. Both husband and wife made a huge impact during their many years at ETH Zurich: Barbara, who had a degree in psychology, was an advisor in the Human Resources Division, while Diethelm was a professor at the Institute for Theoretical Physics, where he established the Econophysics group. The couple devoted a great deal of energy and empathy to ETH Zurich and its members, and their loss will be keenly felt by students, researchers and staff.



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Michel Fornasier with a robotic hand prosthesis. Photograph by Alessandro Della Bella.



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Golden Tricycle



Photo: Alessandro Della Bella

Flexible motivator

This year's Golden Tricycle award was presented to Lorenz Hurni, ETH Professor of Cartography and Director of the Institute of Cartography and Geo-information. This accolade is awarded to managers who go out of their way to help their team members balance their professional and personal lives. The award was launched in 2007 by Equal!, the ETH Office for Equal Opportunities, and the Academic Association of Scientific Staff at ETH Zurich (AVETH). www.ethz.ch/news-en →

Waste Disposal Week

Freeing up valuable space

In October and November 2016, the Facility Management department will be holding its first joint Waste Disposal Week on ETH Zurich's Zentrum and Hönggerberg campuses. It is hoped that the targeted efforts to clear out offices, corridors, storerooms and basements will free up valuable space. www.ethz.ch/facility-management →

Social media

@ETHZurich on Instagram

ETH Zurich is expanding its social media presence with a new account on Instagram. We hope to use this photo-based social network to keep in touch with students, staff, alumni and anyone else interested in ETH. ETH's official social media channels are managed by Corporate Communications. www.ethz.ch/social-media →



Collegium Helveticum

ZHdK joins Collegium

The Collegium Helveticum is now supported by three universities: in August 2016, Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) joined the University of Zurich and ETH Zurich as a member of the laboratory for transdisciplinary research, which was founded in 1997. Three of the seven fellows are from ETH Zurich: David Gugerli, Renate Schubert (both D-GESS) and Petros Koumoutsakos (D-INFK). www.ethz.ch/internalnews → www.zhdk.ch/news →

ETH Entrepreneur Club

Summer internships at start-ups

From June to August, 30 students had the opportunity to complete an internship at a range of start-up companies, including some ETH spin-offs. The students and companies were brought together for their "Summerpreneurships" by the Impact Hub Zurich in collaboration with the ETH Entrepreneur Club. Start-ups and students who are interested in the next round of internships can apply from January 2017. zurich.impacthub.ch →



Photo: Udo Sotlbberger

Customer satisfaction

Facility Management survey

The Facility Management department is organising another survey in October 2016 in order to find out how satisfied its customers are. All ETH staff are invited to take part. www.ethz.ch/facility-management →



BACKSTAGE AT THE CYBATHLON

The Cybathlon is a major event. Over 70 teams from 25 countries will compete against each other at the SWISS Arena in Kloten. A huge amount of preparation is needed to ensure that everything goes smoothly. For months now, Roland Sigrist, Dario Wyss and Nicole Kasielke have thought about nothing but the upcoming competition. *life* presents these three organisers and their helpers.

Text Inken De Wit
Photos Alessandro Della Bella

The first Cybathlon is set to take place on 8 October 2016 in the ice hockey arena in Kloten in front of up to 5,000 spectators – and all eyes will be on the pilots and their teams. Who will overcome which obstacle with the most skill? Who will reach the finish line first? A total of six disciplines will demonstrate what people with physical disabilities can do with the aid of modern technical assistance systems. Spectators will witness wheelchair users tackling stairs, people with prosthetic arms hanging out washing and individuals with paraplegia riding bikes.

These are all everyday tasks which can be mastered with the help of innovative technology to counter physical impairments.

The people who are responsible for the majority of the organisation, on the other hand, will be virtually unseen by the spectators. But without their tireless efforts, the event simply wouldn't be possible. For months, their lives have revolved almost entirely around the Cybathlon. Roland Sigrist, Dario Wyss and Nicole Kasielke are three of the hardworking people behind the scenes.

A great idea from the start

Two years ago, none of them would have foreseen this. Their involvement in the



Test run in the SWISS Arena in Kloten: To ensure that the actual competition runs smoothly on 8 October 2016, a test run took place in summer 2015. The Cybathlon, after all, is a world first for which many elements have been developed for the first time.

ON

project came about in a very organic way. Roland Sigrist was originally part of the team led by Cybathlon initiator Robert Riener, ETH Professor for Sensory-Motor Systems, and was offered the role of Competition Director based on his specialist knowledge and organisation skills. "I had just finished my doctoral thesis on the topic of complex motor learning with Professor Riener in the Department of Health Sciences and Technology, and I'm also an ETH-trained sports instructor," he explains.

Sigrist had developed an interest in human-robot interaction through his studies, and he also organises sports events in his spare time, so the Cybathlon

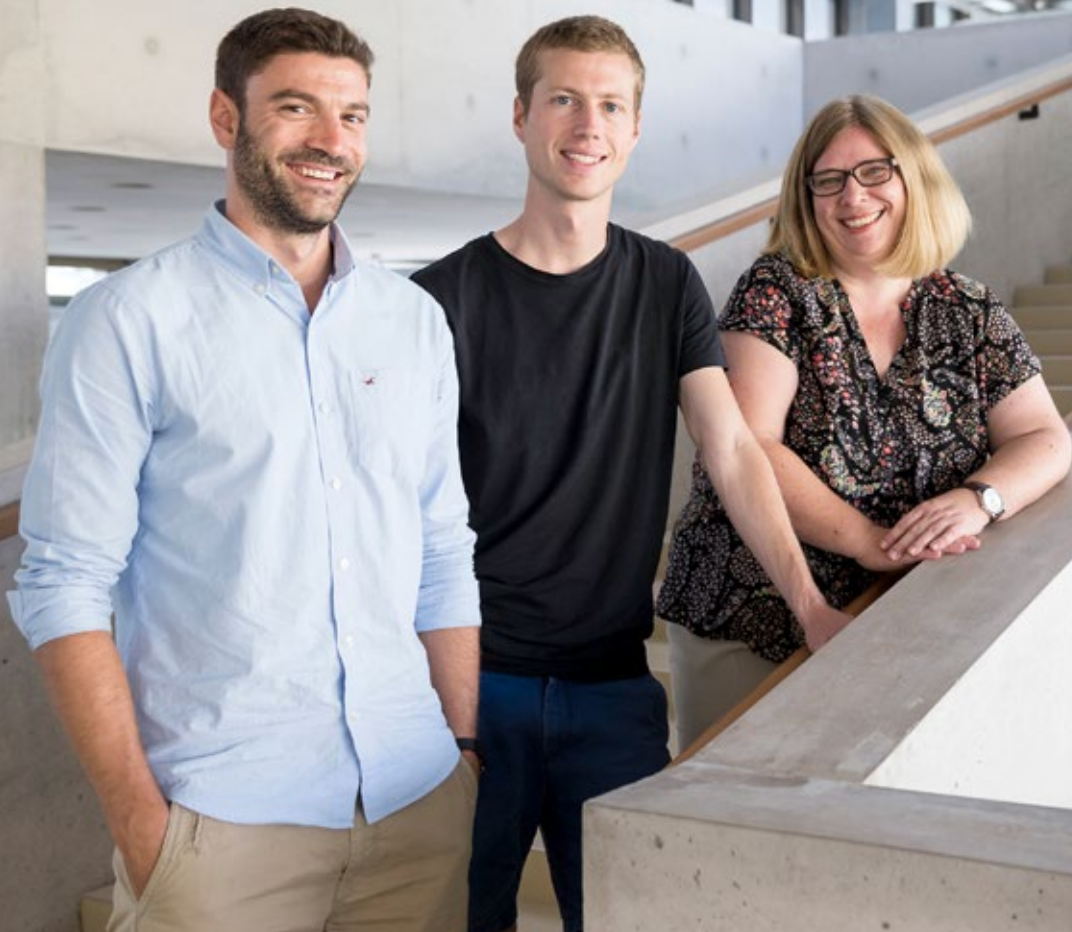
was an exciting professional challenge for him. As Competition Director, Sigrist is now in continual contact with all of

"I really enjoy working on such a socially important project."

Dario Wyss,
Cybathlon Chief Technology Officer

the teams, and he worked with Riener and various other experts to design the course and the rules.

"It was a similar situation for me," says Dario Wyss. He was working as a doctoral student on a research project in the field of rehabilitation robotics in Riener's lab when Sigrist approached him for help with particular tasks, such as the construction of the course obstacles. Over time, it turned into a full-time job. In order to devote himself fully to the Cybathlon, he has put his doctoral work on hold for a year. "I really enjoy it – collaborating with the rest of the team and working on such a socially important project." It is clear to him that, in the future, technology should develop in such a way as to provide the best possible assistance for people with disabilities in places ▶



All for one, one for all: Dario Wyss, Roland Sigrist and Nicole Kasielke (left to right) have received support for their preparations from many ETH Zurich departments.

► where the environment cannot be adapted. As Chief Technology Officer, Wyss is in charge of implementing the course and the arena equipment. And there's a lot to think about, including making sure that there are enough wheelchair spaces in the spectator stands and providing the necessary technology for Schweizer Fernsehen (SRF), the Swiss public broadcasting corporation, which will be covering the competition as part of a special theme day.

Science with entertainment value

Nicole Kasielke, team leader in Corporate Communications, is also fascinated by the Cybathlon. "I first spoke to Robert Riener about it at the end of 2014, and I thought it was a great idea right from the start," she explains. It is also an exciting professional challenge and an opportunity to tackle an extremely complex

communications task. She is now officially in charge of communications for the Cybathlon, coordinating all of the communications activities surrounding the event. She is also involved in planning the event itself and is making sure

“Coordinating everyone involved is definitely the greatest challenge.”

Roland Sigrist,
Cybathlon Competition Director

that, despite the technical and scientific requirements, the entertainment value of the competition is not forgotten. For all three, this is the first time that they have faced a challenge on this scale. "Apart

from the celebration for the 150th anniversary of ETH Zurich 11 years ago, the university has never organised such a large event before," says Kasielke. But if all goes to plan, none of the spectators or participants will be aware of how much pioneering work these three are doing for the Cybathlon. "It's not just a case of organising an event – it's also about the reputation of ETH Zurich," stresses the Cybathlon's Communications Director. "Expectations are high and we have to live up to them."

Everyone at ETH is lending a hand

These three may be responsible for the bulk of the organisation, but they are not doing it alone. The entire Sensory-Motor Systems Lab, led by Cybathlon initiator Riener, the Services department and the ETH Foundation all have a key role to play too. "Services have lots of experience

with event organisation and they are taking on a lot of the implementation,” says Sigrist. “Ann Van der Aa and her team, for example, are organising around 500

“Within ETH, we have everything you need for a large event like this.”

Nicole Kasielke,
Cybathlon Communications Director

volunteers for competition day.” “And the Foundation’s hard work and network of contacts have generated a lot of funding from sponsors,” adds Kasielke. All three of the event organisers are impressed at how much expertise and support they encounter at ETH Zurich. “Within ETH, we have everything you need for a large event like this – from legal issues to IT and security,” says Kasielke.

Immense coordination challenge

Without this support from within the university, it simply wouldn’t be possible to hold the Cybathlon. Just in terms of time alone, there is far too much to clarify and organise. This includes dealing with questions from the teams about their

travel and accommodation, transporting their competition equipment or obtaining visas. “I often spend six hours on emails and meetings before I can start my actual work,” admits Sigrist. Coordinating everyone involved is definitely the greatest challenge. “It requires a certain degree of composure and a flair for planning,” says Sigrist. “And a sense of humour helps too,” adds Wyss.

Although all three are currently working flat out, they are not only looking forward to the imminent competition but are already looking beyond it. They intend to produce a concept for continuing the Cybathlon in collaboration with Riener and submit it to the Executive Board by January 2017. There should still be time, however, for a bit of a breather straight after the competition. And what do they have planned for the day after? Tidying up and lots of sleep. ■

www.cybathlon.ethz.ch/en/ →

Don't miss the Cybathlon

ETH staff can buy discounted tickets (CHF 15.00 individual and CHF 35.00 family) from Campus Info reception in the main building (HG) or Campus Info Hönggerberg (HIL). An ETH staff ID card must be shown in order to purchase the discounted tickets.

Preparations for the SRF theme day on the Cybathlon: The broadcaster has already produced films about the six disciplines for the competition day.



Ensuring accessibility at ETH

The ETH Zurich portfolio currently comprises 217 properties, over 70 percent of which are more than 40 years old. Making sure that all of these buildings are suitable for disabled people is a difficult task, particularly when it comes to old and listed buildings. It is not always possible to fit ramps and stairlifts so that they are directly accessible. When constructing new buildings and carrying out large-scale renovation projects, however, ETH takes care to provide disabled access in accordance with the statutory requirements and building regulations. These include the Swiss disability equality act (BehiG) and disability equality regulation (BehiV), SIA standard 500 on barrier-free buildings (2009 edition) and the regulations of the Canton of Zurich on barrier-free construction. Accessibility for those with limited mobility is constantly being improved. Providing structural aids for people who are visually impaired or hard of hearing, however, remains a major challenge. There are not yet any convincing and generally applicable solutions in this area.

The Real Estate department is supported in its efforts by Ulrich Alois Weidmann. In 2016, the Vice President for Human Resources and Infrastructure at ETH Zurich joined the board of the Swiss office for accessible construction (Schweizerische Fachstelle für behindertengerechtes Bauen).

The contact person at ETH Zurich for students with disabilities is Karin Züst-Santschi from the disability advisory service, part of Student Services. She provides personalised advice for each individual and was also responsible for putting Josep Ballester in touch with the “Scewo” team. Ballester will be appearing at the Cybathlon as the pilot of the “Scewo” wheelchair.

Fine dining – for members of ETH, and visitors too

Marcel Zurbuchen tells us about the new restaurant Bellavista, the site strategy for catering and retail on the Hönggerberg campus and the importance of sustainable catering.

Text Andrea Schmits **Photo** Marvin Zilm

Mr Zurbuchen, here we are in Bellavista, the latest ETH restaurant which is opening in a few days. What makes this restaurant different to the other catering outlets on the Hönggerberg campus?

This is the first ETH restaurant which is explicitly aimed at visitors as well. The aim is to encourage contact between the scientific world and the private sector: lecturers and other ETH members need a place where they can meet guests in a quiet atmosphere. There hasn't really been anywhere suitable since Cheminsula, the former restaurant for lecturers, closed at the end of 2012. Bellavista is also open to guests with no direct links to ETH, making the campus more and more of a city district in its own right.

What can diners expect at Bellavista?

Bellavista offers diners sophisticated à la carte cuisine. At lunchtime, they can choose between three different 3-course menus. The restaurant also provides a stunning view of Zurich's Affoltern district, as well as a full-service lounge, a bar area and an outdoor terrace. The catering is provided by ZFV, which also manages the UniTurm restaurant at the University of Zurich.



As Partner Organisations Coordinator at ETH Zurich, Marcel Zurbuchen is primarily responsible for catering and retail.



How does the completion of this restaurant fit into the wider strategy?

It's the final stage of the ETH Zurich 2010 to 2016 site strategy for catering and retail on the Höggerberg campus.

Which projects did the site strategy include over this period?

The site strategy began with the opening of the Alumni quattro Lounge in 2010. Then came the first mobile food stalls and a food market in 2011. The Coop opened in 2012, followed by the temporary Hexagon canteen in 2013, which provided catering facilities while the physics and chemistry canteens were being refurbished. 2014 saw the opening of Fusion meal & coffee with a Snack Court including a Coop, and the food market opened in 2016.

Bellavista is opening at the same time as the HWW and HWO student accommodation.

We are really pleased that the completion of the site strategy coincides with the opening of the student housing project. Our operators are now extending the opening times of various facilities. And the marketing of the commercial spaces in the HWW building is almost complete as well. This will include Ässbar, a small café and shop which sells baked goods left over from the previous day in an effort to reduce food waste. Projekt Neptun and its help point will also have a spot in the new building. Negotiations are ongoing for the remaining spaces.

Is there a follow-up strategy yet?

An initial interim report has been produced for the catering and retail site strategy for 2017 to 2025. The strategy will be finalised in 2017, taking into account the new master plan, the traffic routing and the overall development of the campus. The site strategy will be approved by the Executive Board and will serve as an important basis for the real estate strategy.

What is the next step?

We've already started work on it – the Alumni quattro Lounge has undergone

some minor refurbishments. We are also reviewing the current concept of the food and market stalls.

Sustainability is a key issue for catering services. What is ETH doing in this regard?

Three years ago, the World Food System Center and ETH Sustainability joined forces with the Catering Commission and the SV Group to launch the "Sustainable Catering at ETH" project. This enabled us to combine science with practical experience. Between 2013 and 2016, the project

"Next year we hope to introduce our own eco-label for ETH catering."

Marcel Zurbuchen

investigated acceptance levels for sustainable menus, changed portion sizes to reduce waste and determined where the gaps were in diners' knowledge.

What measures is ETH taking based on these findings?

Next year we hope to introduce our own eco-label for ETH catering. The label will only be given to caterers who fulfil our conditions – some of them do already. This project has attracted a great deal of interest from caterers, the private sector and international universities. ETH is one of the best universities in the world. We want to compete at a high level with our catering services as well. ■

Open day on 7 October

The new Bellavista restaurant in the HGP building at the northern end of Wolfgang-Pauli-Strasse will open on 10 October 2016. An open day will be held on 7 October from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to give visitors a sneak peak at the new facility.



And ... cut!

The new ETH Zurich video studio will open at the end of September. This facility will enable Multimedia Services to produce formats such as discussion panels, individual statements or video tutorials more quickly and in better quality.

Text Andrea Schmits

Photos Gian Marco Castelberg

It's not easy to find: hidden in room D 13 on the basement floor of the main building, behind a set of acoustic double doors, is the new ETH Zurich video studio. When we pay a visit, Bertrand Meyer is recording a new MOOC (massive open online course) project. Meyer, who was recently made Emeritus Professor of Software Engineering, offers an online course in agile software development and is filming the two dozen introductions for the lessons in the new studio.

Surrounded by bright LED light panels, in front of a horizon featuring the corporate design, he is standing on a marker which indicates the right position and is waiting for the start signal. His glasses are given one last wipe, the ventilation is set to silent, a sound check is carried out and the camera sharpness is adjusted. "Go," says Artan Hajrullahu, a freelance assistant who is managing the recording and operating the camera.

The studio includes an autocue, but Meyer does not need it and is happy to speak freely. In the control booth, media trainee Dominik Portmann is sitting in front of three screens and the sound mixing desk. He controls the sound and



Bertrand Meyer (right) is in the spotlight today.

sharpness of the recording as it is happening and labels the individual clips.

Statements and panel discussions

"The new studio makes our work much more flexible and efficient," says Olaf Schulte, the initial point of contact in Multimedia Services (ITS MMS) for any questions regarding the studio. "It means that we don't have to find suitable locations and set up the materials every time we want to film something, and we are less

dependent on external factors like light and weather. The technical possibilities are also much more extensive."

The studio offers all kinds of options for recording people: group recordings with up to four participants or individual statements, sitting in comfy armchairs or on stools, or at a desk or lectern. "As well as discussion panels, departments can also film short statements to introduce their professors, and researchers can record a greeting for a conference that they are not able to attend in person," says Schulte.

Along with the corporate design background, black and white screens and a green screen are also available. The green screen can be used to add any background in post-production – whether it is a graphic, a photo or a video of the Piazza on the Höggerberg campus.

Videos can also include recorded content such as animations, screencasts or annotated PowerPoint presentations, as well as recordings of research projects, for example, or other objects.

"With our standard settings, we can make recordings at much shorter notice than before," says Schulte. "Take Nobel Prize week in October, for example: in the past, it would have been a major challenge to present a potential prize winner ▶



Quiet please: Dominik Portmann and Artan Hajrullahu in the control booth.



Martin Wieser and Olaf Schulte from Multimedia Services in the new studio.

► from ETH at short notice. We would have had to work very quickly in an unfamiliar environment to produce something that is going to be seen by a lot of people so needs to be of high quality. The studio makes this much easier.”

Videos growing in importance

The studio was designed and built by tpc and Auviso on the basis of preliminary work carried out by the Real Estate department at ETH Zurich. “Our old studio was only a temporary solution with very little space. We have now returned it to its original function as a storeroom,” says Schulte. Demand is expected to grow further: “Experts are confident that videos

will continue to grow in importance in the world of communication. This will affect the scientific world as well.”

The studio is primarily for ETH members whose communication activities will benefit from the use of videos, according to studio manager Martin Wieser. This includes communications officers from the various academic departments and Corporate Communications, lecturers, academic staff or students. “We are open to other universities too. The University of Zurich has already been in touch,” he says. The studio can also be used by ETH-related organisations and other academic institutions. It costs 75 francs per hour, which includes time for setup

and post-production as well as the recording itself. The studio has to be rented complete with staff: “The technology is very complex and cannot be operated by customers,” says Wieser.

In exceptional cases, the studio can be used for photo shoots as well: “It’s not ideal for photo shoots because the lighting is designed for videos and we don’t have flash equipment. But it’s definitely feasible in certain cases,” says Wieser.

DIY version to come

ETH members who are interested in the video studio should contact Olaf Schulte directly. “And as early as possible, although we do aim to respond very quickly,” he says. Soon, however, there will be an alternative: Multimedia Services is working with the Educational Development and Technology department to create a DIY video recording space, set to open by the end of the year, which customers can use for smaller projects. ITS MMS will provide all of the necessary equipment, along with a brief training session.

Although the studio has been used over the past few months for numerous projects – including the MOOC by Bertrand Meyer, ETH meets California, the KITE Award and the workshop talk by Climate Physics Professor Reto Knutti – it will only open officially at the end of September. It’s a big step for Multimedia Services: “This is state-of-the-art technology, and it’s opened up a whole world of possibilities. It has turned out really well,” says Wieser. Schulte adds: “Ten years ago, we were lugging second-hand cameras around the corridors, looking for somewhere to film. In terms of quality, this is a huge leap forward. I can’t wait to see the results.” ■

Open day

The studio will be open to visitors on 2 November from 9 a.m. Appointments can be made in advance by contacting Olaf Schulte: schulte@id.ethz.ch. www.ethz.ch/videostudio →



“It’s reassuring to know you’re not alone”

Text and photo Florian Meyer

Sometimes it can be difficult to practise what you have learned. Especially when you are starting a degree at ETH. The Study Center gives students somewhere to practise tasks together and discuss their work.

Along with the actual content of their courses, the learning and working techniques are often just as much of a challenge for students. According to last year’s student survey, over half found adjusting to new ways of working one of the greatest challenges in their first year. In mathematics, for example, students need to be able to do more than just carry out calculations and reproduce formulas. In order to properly apply the theoretical concepts, principles and rules presented in lectures, students need to practise using them in different applications so they become practical tools rather than merely conceptual ideas.

“At the start of a mathematics course, students discover a new culture and a new way of approaching mathematics,” says Alexander Caspar, Educational Developer in the mathematics department. “They have to learn how to justify their arguments, because in mathematics you have to develop your own solutions and explain them to others. I have to defend my solution, and if someone finds a gap or a contradiction, I have to improve my approach or design a new one.”

As an Educational Developer, Caspar supports the lecturers with new teaching formats. This includes the Study Center, which D-MATH introduced in autumn 2015. The Study Center gives first-year students a place to discuss and work on analysis, linear algebra and physics tasks together, before handing them in to the assistants for marking.

Bachelor’s and Master’s students in their second and third years are employed to provide support – they know exactly what first-years tend to struggle with and what sort of questions they are likely to get stuck on. These coaches are also familiar with the content of the lectures and exercises and they prepare additional material for the students.

If certain questions keep coming up, the coaches tell the lecturers so they can address these issues in their regular teaching. According to Caspar, it’s important to maintain a link to the lectures. As the first-year examinations cover a huge amount of content, this sort of feedback supports the students as they approach the exams.

“The Study Center is a workspace and a discussion space, and it’s also a meeting place where students are given support to make sure they don’t throw in the towel,” Caspar says. “It’s reassuring to know you’re not alone.” It’s also important to find the right location. The Study Center is currently held in flexible auditorium HG E 41 and in the Polyterrasse canteen. ■

www.math.ethz.ch/studycenter →

Text Norbert Staub

Photo Florian Bachmann

Hugo Bretscher studied history. This is still evident today when the Secretary General of ETH speaks about the university. According to Bretscher, its presidential system – which shaped the ETH structural reforms in 1998, 2003 and 2008 – is a little “absolutist”, but in actuality the departments and professors act as a counterbalance. This can be seen when it comes to appointing new staff: a network of experts from the professorate takes the burden off the President, and yet the appointment of professors remains a strategic means of university development for which the President is ultimately responsible.

This is a challenge for management personnel, he says, based on his 28 years in management at ETH. “But ETH needs to develop its own brand of genius as a university. And this requires true independence – the autonomy of institutions in the ETH Domain, which has been anchored in the ETH Law since 2003, is crucial in this regard.”

His wealth of knowledge has earned him a reputation as an institutional conscience. He will be retiring at the end of September: “I am pleased that everything is open. My motto is ‘Servir et disparaître.’” ■

Hugo Bretscher

ETH Zurich Secretary General to retire in September 2016

Servir et disparaître



Rainer Borer
Head of Corporate Communications



Illustration: Kornel Stadler

The wind of change in the newsroom

The arrival of a new boss, complete with their own new ideas, can often herald the wind of change. One thing's for sure: it's bound to involve a shake-up of the organisational chart. But an organisational structure is only ever as good as the staff members and their willingness to work towards higher-level objectives together. In the field of communication, there are lots of objectives to work towards, especially at a top university like ETH, which abounds with academic creativity, student initiative and the will to advance humanity by solving the most urgent problems.

ETH needs to position itself as a modern, open, innovative university that welcomes change, without losing sight of inherent values such as academic integrity and the pursuit of excellence. This is the primary role of Corporate Communications. The department hopes to change the public's perception of ETH, so that it is no longer described as "elitist, inaccessible, divorced from the real world". Because it's not like that at all.

The new Corporate Communications organisational structure, which came into effect on 1 September, is not an end in itself. It is a response to a world of communication which is changing rapidly. Digitalisation has increased the speed of communication exponentially, and both the number of channels and the number of people involved to a greater or lesser extent continue to rise.

How will communication at ETH respond to these changes? The University

is developing its use of videos and, in particular, social media. Since July, ETH has had its own Instagram account. We hope that the photo-sharing network will introduce a younger, and more female, audience to ETH. Just like any other website, ETH's site is an ongoing project. And the CC office is also stepping up its media activities, as this work plays a major role in defining the public's perception of the University.

In order to achieve its objectives, CC will work in two large teams in future: the content team is responsible for developing key content while also serving as a contact point for departments, institutes and ETH administration. The channel team, meanwhile, distributes this content and develops ETH's analogue and digital communication channels.

The two teams are linked by a newsroom where all decisions regarding ETH communications are made under the leadership of a managing editor. The triage system in the newsroom will help to improve the quality of communications, introduce a higher-level strategic dimension and ensure that communications are coordinated and coherent. The new organisational structure is a modern tool to align ETH communications with the new, digital world. ■

Rainer Borer
www.hk.ethz.ch →

VSETH

Campus life – going beyond the classroom

When we think about studying, the same sorts of things tend to come to mind – a packed lecture theatre, a huge stack of heavy books, or heads bent over desks in a hushed library. But we students think there is much more to it than that. Studying doesn't end when the bell rings, and our experiences shouldn't be limited to the classroom. In short, student life extends beyond the lecture hall.

With the opening of the two student accommodation blocks on the Hönggerberg site, we hope that this side of studying will come more to the fore. At the moment, students tend to leave the campus as soon as their work is done for the day, so the Hönggerberg site is deserted by the evening. We hope that the new blocks will bring more life to the campus and that students will want to stay on-site for longer. A busy campus creates a better sense of community and encourages communication between students – particularly those on different degree programmes. For us, this enhances the value of the campus as well as improving the quality of our studies.

We are excited to see what lies in store for the campus and hope to see

further measures designed to invigorate the Hönggerberg site. We think there is real potential to create a campus unlike any other in Switzerland.



Kay Schaller, VSETH President
www.vseth.ethz.ch →



Getting together as "One ETH" to enjoy food, drink and company from around the world: the staff party on the Hönggerberg campus drew nearly 4,000 guests. Relive the sights and sounds of the event at www.ethz.ch/together/snapshots →