



UZH FOUNDATION
The Foundation of the University of Zurich

INSPIRATIO

Supporting with heart and mind



#11

Inclusive
Annual report

Making a difference

by Christian Wenger, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Do you know what I particularly appreciate about my role? It's the positive impact that our foundation work makes possible. The diversity of topics and activities at the University of Zurich (UZH) inspire and motivate us again and again. It is satisfying to know that, through our work with you, we can make a difference to UZH.

We find ourselves in a challenging environment characterized by geopolitical unrest and economic instability. In addition, public finances are coming under increasing pressure. At such times, our foundation's work becomes all the more important. Despite these difficult conditions, the UZH Foundation was able to continue significantly supporting and strengthening the university and its research last year.

UZH offers answers to a wide range of compelling questions. For example, our experts analyze the influence and role of artificial intelligence, and by contextualizing this new technology, they create a sound scientific basis for further exploration and application. Likewise, UZH researchers show how medical progress can alleviate suffering in the future. UZH is committed to fostering constructive and motivating exchanges, made possible by the promotion of talented and diverse young researchers. Read the interview with Vice President Research Elisabeth Stark.

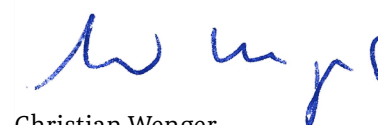
Our new annual magazine "Inspiratio" tells stories about commitment and the partnerships that are driving the University of Zurich forward. In our photo gallery, you can discover what motivates UZH alumni to get involved with the university and how they are inspired by the many support and funding opportunities.

Excellent research requires private third-party funding from dedicated people who are committed to Zurich as a research hub. We would like to thank everyone who has shown their support for the University of Zurich. Every contribution, whether large or small, helps to strengthen our alma mater and shape the future of teaching and research. Our thanks go to each and every one of you.

We are determined to ensure that the University of Zurich – together with you – can continue to make a difference in the future.

Thank you for your support!

Yours



Christian Wenger



The research hub Zurich is very close to my heart. In order to support the next generation, it is important to me *to promote young research talent.*

Ursina Schneider-Bodmer
UZH Alumna Law

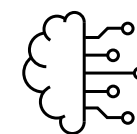


Dive into research at UZH

With its seven faculties, UZH covers a considerable breadth of subjects and offers an extraordinary variety of research opportunities. On the following pages, you can read about what is currently driving research and science and how to get involved as a supporter.



UZH is one of the few institutions in the world to develop **gene therapies** and apply them clinically. Where does this much-discussed method stand today and what opportunities does it offer **for patients** (page 6)?



Artificial intelligence is permeating our everyday lives. These changes have far-reaching consequences for teaching and research. Teaching new AI skills is becoming increasingly important (page 8).



As conflicts and tensions flare up, in-depth knowledge of the economy, politics, culture and media landscape in Eastern Europe is becoming increasingly important. UZH is working to create a **new professorship for Modern Eastern European Studies** (page 10).



More than a third of all plant and animal species in Switzerland are endangered. The **ARES remote sensing project** provides a new approach to understanding environmental changes (page 12).



In this **interview**, **Vice President Research Elisabeth Stark** discusses the promotion of research and young talent at Switzerland's largest university (page 16).



In the laboratory,
the team is researching
life-saving gene
therapies.

Pictures: Frank Brüderli

Hope through gene therapy

For decades, scientists have dreamed of influencing the genes of organisms. In medicine, too, research into gene therapies using human bone marrow stem cells is proceeding at full speed. Where does gene therapy stand today and what prospects does it offer patients?

Genetic research has always been the subject of controversy debate. While some see it as a revolutionary opportunity to improve life, others consider it too risky and ethically questionable. What exactly does gene modification mean in medicine? Gene therapies are developed to cure seriously ill people. They correct the genetic defect underlying a specific congenital hereditary disease. In contrast to the treatment of symptoms with conventional medication, gene therapy addresses the genetic cause of a disease in order to achieve lasting recovery. Gene therapy is often the last resort for patients with serious illness.

The history of gene therapy has seen increasing clinical successes and many saved lives to date. Nevertheless, there have been failures in the past, sometimes with serious side effects, such as in treating certain diseases of cancer. These failures forced researchers around the world to go back to the lab and do some intensive

research. These incidents led to criticism that gene therapy methods were too risky and that people were being misused for the purposes of research.

The question of ethics

Research ethics is based on various principles. For example, the benefits and the risks of harm must be carefully weighed. Although gene therapies were initially considered to be highly risky, due to the novelty of the therapy, they were the last hope for terminally ill people. This situation led affected patients to consent to gene therapy trials despite the transparent risks. Step by step, gene therapy was thus able to develop further. When it comes to ethical issues, it is therefore important to differentiate between different procedures. For example, the genome editor “CRISPR” still poses an increased risk in many cases, due to its lack of efficiency, and therefore is more frequently criticized.

This method contrasts with “gene addition”, in which healthy genes are added to bone marrow stem cells, and which is considered very safe today. Currently, approved gene therapies are only carried out on body cells (so-called somatic cells), which do not alter the genetic material in germ cells (i. e. egg cells and sperm cells) and therefore cannot be passed on to offspring. Genetic manipulation of human germ cells or embryos is currently prohibited throughout the world due to ethical concerns.

“This type of gene therapy is considered safe and ethically justifiable.”

Prof. Janine Reichenbach, immunologist at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine (IREM) and the University Children’s Hospital Zurich, also confirms this distinction: “As doctors, we help affected people who need gene therapy due to their serious illness and lack of other treatment options. Thanks to the novel and highly precise procedure we have developed, side effects such as cancer development (observed in earlier studies) has become very unlikely. This type of gene therapy is therefore considered safe and ethically justifiable.”



Prof. Dr. Janine Reichenbach
Immunologist and
Professor of Somatic
Gene Therapy

Study

Chronic granulomatosis disease

Prof. Reichenbach is conducting a clinical gene therapy study at the IREM and the University Children’s Hospital for the treatment of septic granulomatosis, a severe congenital defect of the immune system. The immune cells of children with this disorder are incapable of killing ingested bacteria and molds. These patients could therefore acquire a fatal infection every time they go out for a walk. Gene therapy can save these children.

Following the successful completion of the clinical trial, the Reichenbach Group’s aim is to commercialize this procedure so that patients worldwide can benefit.

Pioneering work at the UZH

UZH is one of the few institutions in the world to develop and clinically implement gene therapies. As a pioneer in this field of research, Reichenbach’s focus is on the treatment of congenital diseases of the immune system. Here, gene therapy promises a cure through bone marrow stem cell transplants derived from the body’s own gene-corrected cells. This gene addition procedure prevents serious diseases that can arise from transplanting cells donated by others.

In the future, these therapies may be used for more common diseases, such as dementia or tumors. Current scientific developments are thus paving the way for future medical treatments.

Learning how to use artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) permeates our everyday lives. It also poses new challenges for university teaching and research. How are AI tools such as ChatGPT used in research and teaching, and what new skills are required to use them?



ChatGPT can be used to generate human-like text responses using machine learning and deep neural networks.

The launch of ChatGPT, a chatbot from the American company OpenAI, caused a major stir at the end of 2022. Although artificial intelligence has long been part of our everyday lives, ChatGPT made new waves. AI tools are already being used extensively in various industries, including in teaching and research, where they help students, researchers and lecturers to organize their work more efficiently. ChatGPT, for example, may formulate questions, conduct research more quickly or summarize and simplify texts. But AI tools offer much more than these basic organizational tasks.

Noah Bubenhofer is Professor of German Linguistics at the University of Zurich. He researches the role of language in society, focusing particularly on artificial intelligence and large language models. He has been using language models and other machine-based methods to empirically study language use for some time.

The linguist explains: “AI systems, such as chatbots, enable more individualized assistance for students. These systems offer a kind of tutor with whom students can work through content. But in my field of linguistics, for example, it is also a huge help since the barriers to programming are lower. A chatbot can help me implement my ideas for an analysis.”

Chatbots also struggle

However, this delegation of tasks to AI is being regarded with increasing criticism, especially in terms of students' learning processes. There is a fear that students will not acquire certain skills in the first place: learning approaches that are primarily characterized by conscious understanding, combined with frequent practice and experience, are being eliminated over time.

However, it is not quite that simple, as Bubenhofer also emphasizes: “AI does not deliver a finished result. Rather, it's about the new possibilities that arise from the cooperation between man and machine.” Particularly when it comes to quality control, users must focus on critically examining the content produced by AI.

“The systems do not deliver a finished result. Rather, it's about cooperation between man and machine.”

Even if chatbots write grammatically flawless texts, their content can be complete nonsense. The tools have no intelligence, they only simulate it. They also lack human judgment. At the same time, systematic errors can occur if chatbots are (intentionally or inadvertently) steered in a certain direction through their training data, thereby promoting misinformation, prejudice or discrimination.

Teaching new skills

Just as new regulations became necessary with the introduction of the pocket calculator, these will also have to be established for AI tools. Transparent use of the tools is important here. Students and researchers, as well as lecturers, must experiment with and practice new ways of dealing with AI systems. While the product has long been the focus, we must now concentrate on the process. For example, those writing a text must ask themselves: How can ChatGPT be used in my work? How have problems occurred in the past and where are the possible sources of future error? It is clear that established teaching approaches, as well as learning materials and performance assessments, will change.

“We have to ask ourselves what skills students should have – and where it makes sense for them to use AI help.” Bubenhofer therefore advocates so-called AI literacy: “What do you need to know about large-scale language



Prof. Dr. Noah Bubenhofer
Professor of German Linguistics and expert on issues relating to AI

models and AI applications to be able to use them sensibly, responsibly and critically?” One thing is certain: the use of AI tools will become standard practice. This makes it doubly important that AI literacy is taught in schools and universities.

Understanding possible conflicts, strengthening security

Our society is complex. Economics and politics are just as much a part of it as cultural and social interdependencies. The various factors are in constant flux – and can lead to conflicts, as is currently the case in Eastern Europe. With its scientific work and expertise, the University of Zurich (UZH) can play an important role in crisis situations.

Our interconnected world is moving and changing faster than ever. Increasing globalization has brought prosperity and economic growth to many Western countries. However, this interconnectedness also harbors political and economic risks: unequal social systems, different world views and interdependencies can lead to instability and the potential for conflict.

“The professorship is of great importance in view of the increasingly tense geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe.”

Conflicts arise when opposing interests collide. Where strife prevails, globalization stagnates. Previously functioning connections are dissolved. As a result, supply chains, for example, can be interrupted. Our increasingly interconnected world means that these clashes have ever more far-reaching economic and, above all, security implications – including for Switzerland.

Swiss security policy

The conflicts and tensions that have flared up – especially in Eastern Europe – have created a new awareness of security issues. The Department of Defense, Civil Protection and Sport is responsible for Swiss security policy. Hotspots and their implications for international cooperation are analyzed on an ongoing basis. Through this analysis, measures are proposed to enable Switzerland to prepare for possible conflict situations.

Science and research are of crucial importance here. Many Eastern European countries have far-reaching political, social and economic issues that harbor a high potential for conflict. Only expert knowledge can provide the most appropriate basis for security-policy decisions.

Ambassador Pálvi Pulli, Head of Strategy and Cooperation and Deputy State Secretary for Security Policy,

also emphasizes the importance of science for her work: “Events and developments in Eastern Europe, especially in Russia, have a major impact on Switzerland’s security – and not just since Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. It is important for the shaping of Swiss security policy that these events are observed and analyzed from a scientific perspective in order to understand and interpret them appropriately.”

Professorship for Modern Eastern European Studies

To make the best decisions on security policy and economics in the face of international tensions, a sound knowledge of the economy, politics, culture and media landscape in Eastern Europe is indispensable. However, these skills have been neglected in recent years. Therefore as part of the establishment of a new Institute for Eastern European Studies at UZH, the creation of a professorship for Modern Eastern European Studies is being planned. The aim of the professorship is to research relevant topics



Prof. Dr. Jeronim Perović
Professor of Eastern European History



Developments in Eastern Europe have a major impact on Switzerland. Specialist knowledge is urgently needed.

such as political conflicts, social transformations, geopolitical shifts or energy security in the context of Eastern Europe, in order to provide background information and experience for decision-makers in business and politics. For UZH, it is a duty and privilege to deploy its scientific resources in addressing the issues in Eastern Europe.

“In view of the increasingly tense geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe, this professorship is of great importance,” explains Jeronim Perović, Professor of Eastern European History at UZH. “As a university, it is our responsibility to communicate specialist expertise to relevant players and an interested public. In this way, we can best prepare Switzerland for current and future challenges or threats.” It has become an urgent priority to sharpen expertise in Eastern Europe and expand specialist knowledge. The Professorship of Modern Eastern European Studies aims to close this gap and thus provide a basis for economic and security policy decisions.

A new look at biodiversity

Initially pink, later sky blue: the changing colors of the Lake Constance forget-me-not gives its carpet of flowers an unforgettable appearance. However, the plant could disappear in the next few years. But this is a fate shared by thousands of plant and animal species. The University of Zurich is working on new solutions to preserve habitats.

As recently as twenty years ago, the Lake Constance forget-me-not occurred not only in the Lake Constance area, but also down the Rhine, on the western part of Lake Geneva and near the Lakes Maggiore and Lugano. Since the middle of the 20th century at the latest, however, populations of the plant have been steadily declining, so that today only a few specimens can be found, primarily in the Lake Constance area and on Lake Starnberg. The reasons for the declining populations vary and range from shoreline development and hydraulic engineering activities to changes in water levels resulting from climate change.

However, the fate of the forget-me-not is not an isolated case, as a glance at the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment's "Red List" shows: of almost 56,000 plant and animal species in Switzerland, more than a third are now endangered or have already become extinct.

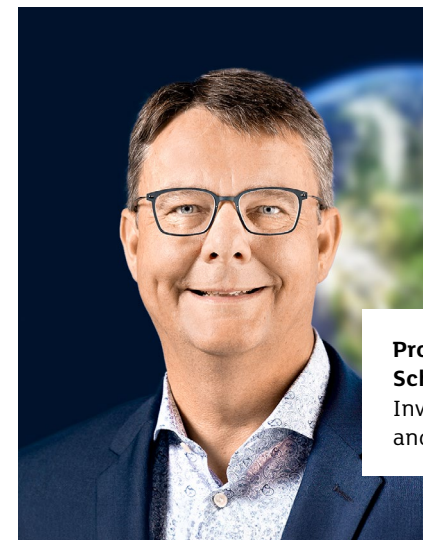
Changed habitats

These effects are mainly attributable to man's interventions in nature. As a result, habitats are continually changing, which means that the requirements of organisms can often no longer be met. This is because habitats differ greatly depending on their inhabitants and these organisms' requirements. For example, the Lake Constance forget-me-not is found exclusively in shore areas, where it grows above water in the winter and spring months, but under water the rest of the time.

These habitat changes also have far-reaching consequences for our society: if the state of biodiversity continues to deteriorate, this will affect the services nature provides, such as food or clean water, which are indispensable to humans. This makes it still more important to thoroughly understand the current state of ecosystems and provide this knowledge to political decision-makers, so that they may develop appropriate solutions and promote habitat biodiversity.



ARES uses flight missions to collect information about large areas. The view from the air also makes it possible to map areas that are otherwise difficult to access.



Prof. Dr. Michael Schaepman Principal Investigator of ARES and President of UZH

UZH's advantage

The Airborne Research Facility for the Earth System, ARES for short, is an ongoing research project at UZH. Thanks to the collaboration and investment of ARES project partners (including NASA), UZH now has a spectrometer that is identical to the one used on the International Space Station and which enables very precise measurements from the air and over large areas. Combined with measurements on site and the expertise of the team of experts led by Prof. Dr. Michael Schaepman, Professor of Remote Sensing and President of UZH, ARES can be used to observe, classify and evaluate changing habitats. ARES makes it possible to obtain a variety of information about ecosystems, including their composition, structure, phenology, and functional and genetic diversity.

With the information gained, site-specific measures can be developed, including protecting particularly endangered animal and plant species. For plant species such as the Lake Constance forget-me-not, this can be a lifesaver.

Sources

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN, Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e.V., Info Flora

Identify biodiversity

Information on habitats is currently obtained in two different ways: through on-site surveys, in which researchers go into the field and collect species information, and through aerial observations, known as remote sensing.

“The University of Zurich has produced groundbreaking research and innovation in the field of ecology and remote sensing.”

While rare and endemic species such as the Lake Constance forget-me-not cannot be reliably observed from the air due to their fine and detailed characteristics, information on large or inaccessible areas cannot be collected by means of on-site surveys. The combination of the two methods has so far not been precise enough, which is why information on biodiversity over large areas has been lacking.



Inventions at UZH
find their way into the economy thanks to entrepreneurship programs.

From inventor to co-founder

A large number of successful inventions originating at the University of Zurich (UZH) have been developed into products by dedicated researchers and brought to market via start-ups. Entrepreneurship programs created specifically for this purpose make it possible.

Who hasn't heard of the much-cited start-up stories from Silicon Valley? Originally founded in a simple garage, they are now global companies with thousands of employees. Apart from big dreams and a good business idea, their founders didn't have much in their pockets. Today they are multi-millionaires.

Such success stories have a strong effect on people who want to run their own ventures. However, the statistics do not paint a very encouraging picture: over 80 percent of Swiss start-ups do not survive the first three years after their founding. Only a small minority of founders can hope to turn their start-up into a so-called "unicorn", a firm that is listed at over one billion Swiss francs. And yet 138 new companies are founded in Switzerland every day – and the trend is increasing.

UZH as a breeding ground

Innovation, entrepreneurship and business start-ups also play an important role at UZH. Did you know that the famous Swiss toothpaste Elmex was invented at the University of Zurich in the 1950s? Other inventions, and the products and companies that emerged from them, have followed. The potential for start-ups is huge due to the wealth and breadth of research areas at UZH. The University of Zurich recognized early on that suitable instruments are needed to enable researchers to gain a foothold in the corporate world. UZH has built programs to meet this need.

New Entrepreneurship Program in Sustainability

The UZH Entrepreneurship programs have already turned a number of UZH researchers in biotechnology, medicine and digital innovation into entrepreneurs. Now there is a new funding program in the area of sustainability:

the UZH Entrepreneur Fellowship "Sustainable Society." Sustainability is broadly defined here and, in addition to earth and plant sciences, includes economics, humanities and social sciences. It enables innovative solutions that address ecological and social challenges to be transferred to market.

"UZH is a breeding ground for innovation and entrepreneurship."

In addition to financial support, these programs also include coaching, a network of like-minded entrepreneurs, know-how transfer and access to laboratory facilities. UZH offers an ideal environment for these activities, and numerous start-ups and spin-offs have already been founded here. Fortunately, the rate of success at UZH is high: after five years, 95 percent of the start-ups or spin-offs that originated at UZH are still on the market, which is an extraordinary success rate and offers promising prospects for future generations of young entrepreneurs.

Success stories

Which UZH start-ups are currently riding the wave of success? With her biotech startup Recolony, for example, UZH molecular biologist Ana Montalban-Arques wants to defeat cancer with intestinal bacteria – preferably without side effects. Former Med-Tech UZH fellow Dr. Prajwal

and his company Clemedi have released "Tuberculini", a molecular test for drug-resistant tuberculosis. Most recently, UZH legal scholar Merens Derungs, founder of the blockchain start-up Arcton, caused a sensation by developing the first crowd-investing platform for start-ups in Switzerland. These are just a few of the dynamic young entrepreneurs who have emerged from UZH.

Peter E. Bodmer, Vice President of the UZH University Council and President of the Innovation Park Zurich Foundation, underlines the importance of programs that bring research into the economy: "To establish and develop a business idea, a stable and broad network is irreplaceable. Our aim is to create ideal conditions in an innovative environment so that the best ideas can take off – a breeding ground for innovation and entrepreneurship. We all benefit when ground-breaking research finds its way into the economy. For example, newly developed medicines or therapies can alleviate the suffering of many people."

Investing in the future

Without such entrepreneurship programs, many promising talents who make a substantial contribution to our society would be lost. Whether through the creation of new jobs or the emergence of new services and products: starting a business adds value for everyone. An investment in entrepreneurship is an investment in the future.



Peter E. Bodmer
Vice President of the
University Council UZH

“University research is like the Olympics”

Elisabeth Stark began her successful academic career in Germany, became a full professor at the Free University of Berlin and was appointed Professor of Romance Linguistics at the University of Zurich (UZH) in 2008. In 2021, she took over as Vice-President for Research and has been responsible for promoting research, innovation and young talent ever since. Find out in the interview what makes UZH a unique research institution.

Interview: David Iselin

How important is research at UZH?

It is, of course, very important. An integral part of our mission statement is: *UZH is a research university. It enables, promotes and expects its members to conduct research.* We are also a member of LERU (League of European Research Universities). Research, the promotion of young talent, and innovation are key functions at UZH, as is research-based teaching in line with the Humboldtian ideal.

What are UZH's strengths in an international context?

UZH is very visible with its research. For example, we are a leader in precision oncology, psychological research on healthy aging, structural biology, remote sensing, astrophysics and particle physics, linguistics and behavioral economics. In addition, our Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Vetsuisse, is ranked 4th in the world, which makes me particularly pleased and proud.

How does UZH attract young researchers?

Here, we have renowned researchers who draw talent to UZH. Since the beginning of 2024, we have also created new, improved conditions for doctoral students, who are guaranteed more “protected research time”, i. e. time that can be used explicitly and exclusively for their own research.

“Our location in Zurich provides excellent conditions for innovative research.”

In addition, since 2023 we have improved tools for the planning of UZH academic careers. With the “Lecturer Model”, for example, which represents a permanent research position classified under a professorship, researchers with a doctorate receive a higher salary. This provides additional security for researchers in their personal lives or when planning their families. This is highly appreciated in Zurich, where the cost of living is comparatively high.

Which research trends will be pursued more closely at UZH in the future?

Due to demographic changes, geriatric medicine will play an increasingly important role in the coming years. Precision medicine, driven by technological achievements, will continue to gain momentum. Sustainability can also not be ignored, especially biodiversity, which shapes the quality of our living spaces. The importance of researching language, as the most important evolutionary innovation of the human species, will increase, as will digitalization, which is already omnipresent in our everyday lives.



Interview with
Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Stark,
Vice President Research

“The UZH Foundation closes important gaps in research funding.”

is central to this – because some of these gaps are systematic; for example, expensive infrastructures are currently under particular pressure, even though they are a prerequisite for cutting-edge research and the medical care of tomorrow. In some cases, however, there are also special subjects that are close to the hearts of donors and which otherwise would have fewer opportunities with public funding bodies. The UZH Foundation is an ideal match between researchers and committed individuals, foundations, organizations and companies. It brings together people who want to make a difference and achieve something important.

What challenges do you see in terms of promoting young talent?

Competition from the private sector is fierce. Researchers in the fields of artificial intelligence and large language models, for example, are in high demand on the job market. I see the post doc phase as a further challenge. These temporary positions often occur during a time of life when researchers are appropriately, and there is a great deal of uncertainty about the future. This means that some talented people opt for a safe harbor outside academia – especially young female talent. Nevertheless, UZH is and remains very attractive. At UZH, researchers are greatly appreciated and can make their own ideas soar. Some of our researchers have had particular success.

What advice would you give to a promising research talent?

I would say: you have to keep at it, keep at it – and never give up! The effort is worth it, because you get to do the best job there is. As a researcher at a university, you enjoy freedoms that are rarely found in other professions. It's meaningful work because you can make a difference and have a positive impact on the lives of many people.

Professor Stark, thank you very much for the interview!

Research is resource-intensive. How do you set priorities?

The prioritization of specific research projects and topics is determined in discussion with the university management, often supported by external expert opinions. The schools develop their own strategies, which are then coordinated appropriately in discussions with the university management. The general rule is: research is competitive, university research is no amateur sport, rather it is the Olympics. Promoting top performance requires setting priorities; at the same time, however, we always keep our performance mandate in mind.

Researchers are dependent on funding. How can they finance their research?

There are both internal and external public funding opportunities, as well as private third-party funding acquired via the UZH Foundation. Every researcher is free to apply through the appropriate sources of funding. The Research Funding Department's Grants Office, under my own Vice President's Office, provides advice and support. There are researchers with particularly cost-intensive research who may draw on all three sources of funding. Thanks to donations, the UZH Foundation closes important funding gaps in research projects.

What importance do you attach to private third-party funding?

The role of private support in research funding is becoming increasingly important. The work of the UZH Foundation as a foundation of the University of Zurich

I feel a close connection to the University of Zurich. Thanks to the support of the UZH, *I can express my solidarity* and contribute to the development of research and teaching.

Christian Bretscher
UZH Alumnus Law



Courageous Collaborative Respectful

by Annelise Alig Anderhalden, CEO

As Managing Director of the UZH Foundation, I encounter many fascinating individuals. These are people who, with the greatest conviction, promote innovative research and teaching. They are people who support young students, so that everyone has the same opportunities – regardless of their social background. And they are alumni and alumnae who want to give something back to their university. The conversations are very personal and moving. And they are characterized by the desire to do something good for society with a donation to UZH.

The discussion is often about personal hopes and wishes, and also includes clear expectations regarding what their donation should achieve. What these people have in common is their trust in the University of Zurich and the UZH Foundation. We at the foundation treat this trust with great care. It is also a mandate that the donation be used precisely as designated. In order to live up to this responsibility, we act for our donors in accordance with our values: courageously, collaboratively, respectfully.

With a heartfelt thank you to all our supporters.

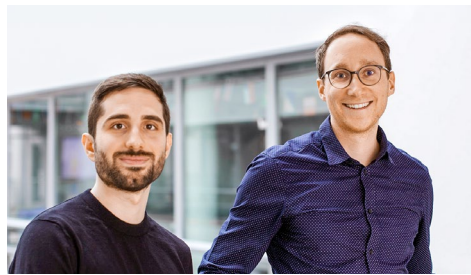
Your

Annelise Alig Anderhalden

Highlights

UZH Postdoc Team Award

Carlo Cervia-Hasler and André Baron Meyer receive this year's UZH Postdoc Team Award for developing a digital platform for long-Covid patients. The two UZH researchers developed an innovative smartwatch application and a companion app that provides long-Covid sufferers with more personalized information about their own physical needs and limits. This award was made possible thanks to a donation from a private individual.



New sub-foundations

The UZH Foundation integrates two other foundations under its umbrella: the Stiefel-Zangger Foundation supports doctoral and postdoctoral students through scholarships; and the Foundation for Scientific Research and Teaching at UZH promotes scientific research and teaching across all disciplines and thematic areas.

The dinosaurs are coming!

Starting in March 2024, skeletons of a Hesperosaurus, Allosaurus and Diplodocus will be on display at the UZH Zoological Museum. The dinosaurs are part of the Aathal Dinosaur Museum's collection and form the foundation of the new University of Zurich Natural History Museum.



Giving Back

Our Giving Back annual event takes place for the second time. A great opportunity to get together with alumni and friends of the University of Zurich, guests exchanged ideas directly with the researchers. Our Giving Back community is growing steadily and more exciting events are already being planned at UZH.

Modern irradiation device for animal hospital

The new radiation machine at Zurich Animal Hospital, the most modern of its kind in European veterinary medicine, is installed and ready for use. It is used to treat tumor patients, such as dogs and cats, with radiotherapy, to rid them of their cancers. Thanks to its extraordinarily precise radiation technology, these treatments can be tolerated better. The purchase of the device was made possible thanks to donations from private individuals and foundations.



Gender Medicine Professorship launched

Prof. Dr. med. Carolin Lerchenmüller takes up her office as Associate Professor of Gender Medicine on May 1, 2024. She studied medicine at the University of Heidelberg and obtained her doctorate in 2012 at the University of Heidelberg and the Thomas Jefferson University Center for Translational Medicine in Philadelphia, PA, USA. This professorship was made possible in part through donations from foundations and private individuals.

UZH among the guilds

In the fall, we hold our annual event with Zurich guild members. UZH researchers report on current research topics, answer questions and give guild members an insight into their scientific work.



Endowed Chair of Sustainable Economics

Effectively combating climate change requires fundamental shifts in the economy and society. How can we use our resources more sustainably while minimizing losses in our standard of living? Researchers at the Department of Economics are investigating these and other questions. The creation of a professorship for Sustainable Economics, endowed by the Vontobel Foundation, marks another milestone.



How would you like to get involved?

You have many different options to engage with the University of Zurich. See below to find the right funding opportunity so you can get started today, making progress for tomorrow.



Giving Back

Become part of the Giving Back community. With your annual contribution you support socially relevant research and the important work of UZH and the UZH Foundation.



Legacies

Continue making an impact. Include UZH in your will. You can designate specific departments, faculties and institutions as beneficiaries, or make an undesignated bequest.



Support Projects

Support your favorite subject by contributing to a research project. UZH offers a wide variety of projects in all disciplines.



Your foundation

Establish your own foundation under the umbrella of the UZH Foundation. As an umbrella foundation, we take care of the administration and management of your own foundation, so your funds can go farther.

Consolidated financial statement

Balance sheet

in CHF	December 31, 2023	December 31, 2022
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	41 824 268	39 015 502
Other current receivables	554 513	302 252
Accrued income	43 680	36 707
Current assets	42 422 461	39 354 461
Financial assets	89 165 140	77 248 859
Intangible assets	133 867	204 895
Fixed assets	89 299 008	77 453 755
Total assets	131 721 469	116 808 216
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	501 306	407 664
Other current liabilities	34 050	47 689
Accrued expenses	42 072	40 056
Current liabilities	577 428	495 409
Fund capital	127 790 293	113 128 400
of which sub-foundations	21 196 665	14 778 976
Fund capital	127 790 293	113 128 400
Debt	128 367 721	113 623 809
Foundation capital	50 000	50 000
Uncommitted / committed capital	2 165 224	1 995 884
Free capital	1 138 523	1 138 523
Retained earnings	1 138 523	1 414 306
Profit / loss current year	0	- 275 783
Equity	3 353 747	3 184 407
Total liabilities	131 721 469	116 808 216

Comments on the financial statement

Balance sheet

In current assets, the positive interest rate trend was used to invest cash and cash equivalents until the new investment strategy was fully implemented in December 2023. Initial investments in components of this investment strategy led to an increase in financial assets.

On the liabilities side, there was an increase in current liabilities due to invoices from UZH. Fund capital increased due to the net increase in new funding projects. Free capital developed in line with the annual result of the UZH Foundation.

Profit and loss statement

In 2023, we recorded growth in new funds received summing up to CHF 32.5 million. The area of contract management, which describes grants that are accepted together with the University of Zurich, continued to grow.

In the fundraising area, we were able to acquire funds for new broader topics. With the integration of the over 100-year- old “Stiftung für wissenschaftliche Forschung” (Foundation for Scientific Research) at the University of Zurich, which is reported under “Grants received – sub-foundations”, we will be supporting an even broader spectrum at UZH in the future. The management of what are now 11 sub-foundations also resulted in an increase in service income compared to the previous year.

On the expenditure side, the funds disbursed for projects developed in line with inflows, due to the progress of projects and funding. The strategic expansion of the fundraising area is now fully reflected in personnel expenses. The positive performance of the capital markets, particularly in the final quarter of 2023, led to an encouraging investment return.

Profit and Loss statement

in CHF	December 31, 2023	December 31, 2022
Grants received – Contract management	20 736 574	19 212 606
Grants received – Acquisition	4 550 182	5 316 540
Grants received – Sub-foundations	7 139 764	5 492 910
Undesignated donations received	103 793	174 164
Grants received	32 530 313	30 196 220
Contribution UZH	742 500	750 000
Various income	820 128	731 002
Income from services	255 113	134 945
Management fees	565 015	596 057
Operating income	34 092 941	31 677 222
Direct project expenses	- 21 215 976	- 20 651 789
Personnel expenses	- 722 307	- 628 810
Other operating expenses	- 91 649	- 102 270
Fundraising expenses	- 813 956	- 731 080
Personnel expenses	- 844 440	- 832 790
Other operating expenses	- 107 146	- 135 445
Depreciation and amortization	- 85 632	- 84 335
Administration expenses	- 1 037 218	- 1 052 570
Operating result	11 025 792	9 241 783
Financial income	4 958 760	3 304 116
Financial expenses	- 1 153 318	- 15 849 680
of which asset management costs	- 348 675	- 315 011
Net financial result	3 805 442	- 12 545 564
Annual result (before change in fund and organizational capital)	14 831 234	- 3 303 781
Withdrawals from funds	21 281 745	32 506 134
Allocations to funds	- 35 943 638	- 30 159 755
Fund result	- 14 661 894	2 346 379
Annual result (before change in organizational capital)	169 340	- 957 402
Allocations / Uses		
Fund withdrawals committed capital (unrestricted funds)	150 796	662 480
Fund allocations committed capital (unrestricted funds)	- 320 136	- 184 616
Fund result committed capital (unrestricted funds)	- 169 340	477 864
Fluctuation reserve	0	203 755
Change in free capital (annual result)	0	275 783
Change in other organizational capital	0	479 538
Balance (after allocation to organizational capital)	0	0

Thank you very much!

Numerous foundations, private individuals and companies have supported research and teaching at the University of Zurich with their donations to the UZH Foundation over the past year. We would like to thank all donors for their commitment! Our thanks go also to those who prefer to remain anonymous. Institutional and private donors of CHF 10,000 or more are listed here in the annual report.

Foundations and other organizations

Avina Foundation
Balgrist Foundation
Bärbel and Paul Geissbühler Foundation
BAREVA Foundation
Baugarten Foundation
Careum Foundation
Colbianco Foundation
Dr. Eric Slack-Gyr Foundation
Dr. med. Adolf and Adelheid Gretener-Thürlemann Foundation
Ernst Göhner Foundation
Evangelical Reformed Church of the Canton of Zurich
Excellence Foundation Zurich
Fondation Botnar
Geistlich-Stucki Foundation
ACCENTUS charitable foundation
EMPIRIS charitable foundation
SYMPHASIS charitable foundation
Georg and Bertha Schwyzer-Winiker Foundation
Hans-Eggenberger Foundation
House of the Swiss Cancer League
Helmut Horten Foundation
Catholic Church in the Canton of Zurich
Kühne Foundation
Margrit Weisheit Foundation
Max Wiederkehr Foundation
Monique Dornonville de la Cour Foundation
NOMIS Foundation
Otto Gamma Foundation
Palatin Foundation
Peter Bockhoff Foundation
PSYCHE Vreni & Lukas Richterich Foundation
ResOrtho Foundation
SCS Swiss Child Support Foundation
Donation Foundation Bank Vontobel
Foundation Amaari
Experimental Biomedicine Foundation
Fehlmann Family Foundation
Foundation for Cardiovascular Research
Foundation for Scientific and Technical Research
Mercator Foundation Switzerland
UBS Foundation of Economics in Society
Uniscientia Foundation
VELUX FOUNDATION
Vontobel Foundation
walter haefner foundation
Werner Siemens Foundation
Zurich University of Applied Sciences

Companies

Adecco Group AG
Camlog Biotechnologies GmbH
Dentium Co. Ltd.
Geistlich Pharma AG
Institut Straumann AG
Rahn+Bodmer Co.
Swiss Re AG
Thommen Medical AG
t2b AG

Private individuals and alumni

Kurt Schwarz
Monique Bär
Natasha Mueller

**Account details for donations
in Swiss francs**

Zürcher Kantonalbank, 8010 Zurich
IBAN: CH17 0070 0110 0039 2046 3
BIC (Swift): ZKBKCHZZ80A
Account number: 1100-3920.463
Clearing no.: 700
ZKB postal account: 80-151-4

Please note your name, address and the purpose of your donation on the bank transfer. This will enable us to issue you with a donation receipt. If you prefer a payment slip, we will be happy to send you one.

Imprint

Publisher UZH Foundation
Concept and editing David Iselin, Sarina Tobler, Laura Furlanetto, Dominik Heitzmann, UZH Foundation
Proofreading Supertext AG, Zurich

Sources

Biodiversität in der Schweiz, Bundesamt für Umwelt BAFU 2023; Bodensee-Vergissmeinnicht, BUWAL / SKEW / ZDSF / ProNatura 1999; Das Bodensee-Vergissmeinnicht – in Gefahr! Ein Märchen in Himmelblau, Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e. V. (BUND) – Friends of the Earth Germany 2021

Design and preliminary stage

KlingGrafik GmbH, Thalwil
Photography Andreas Eggenberger, Frank Brüderli, Michelle Aimée Oesch, Gian Marco Castelberg, Michele Di Fede, Nathalie Huber, David Iselin, unsplash, depositphotos, istockphoto.com

© UZH Foundation 2024

I am very grateful for the excellent education I received at UZH. *I would like to bring together alumni* who, along with myself, will carry on the innovative spirit of UZH.

UZH Foundation

Moussonstrasse 15
CH-8044 Zurich

Phone +41 44 634 34 00
info@uzhfoundation.ch
www.uzhfoundation.ch/en

On the front page

Jonas Birk
UZH Alumnus Economics