

# Ordinance on the Organisation of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne

LEX 1.1.1

Of 1st March 2004 (status as at 1st January 2025)

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*The Direction of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, based on Art. 3, para. 1, point a. of the Ordonnance sur l'EPFZ et l'EPFL of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2003 (ETH Board Ordinance on the Zurich and Lausanne Federal Institutes of Technology)<sup>1</sup>, hereby adopts the following:*

## Section 1 General Provisions

### Article 1 Subject Matter

This Ordinance defines the structure of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), and the organisation and decision-making powers of its Direction and of its members, Schools, Colleges and Support Services.

### Article 2 Structure and Headquarters

<sup>1</sup> The organisational structure of the EPFL is comprised of a Direction, Schools, Colleges, an EPFL Assembly representing each relevant group of people at EPFL, Centres and Platforms, as well as Support Services.

<sup>2</sup> EPFL is headquartered in Ecublens (Vaud).

## Section 2 EPFL Direction

### Chapter 1: Composition, Organisation, and Competencies

#### Article 3 Composition and Organisation

<sup>1</sup> The EPFL Direction is composed of the following members:

- a. the President
- b. the Vice-president for Academic Affairs (VPA / Provost)
- c. the Vice-president for Support to Strategic Initiatives (VPS)
- d. the Vice-president for Innovation and Impact (VPI)
- e. the Vice-president for Human Development (VPH)
- f. the Vice-president for Finances (VPF)
- g. the Vice-president for Operations (VPO)

<sup>2</sup> The President is deputised by the Vice-president for Academic Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> The Direction is comprised mainly of EPFL professors.

<sup>4</sup> The Vice-president for Academic Affairs may appoint Associate Vice-presidents.

<sup>5</sup> The decisions of the Direction are taken by a majority of members, provided that a quorum of five (5) members is reached. Decisions are recorded in writing.

<sup>6</sup> The meetings of the EPFL Direction are chaired by the President or, in case of absence, by the Vice-president for Academic Affairs.

<sup>7</sup> In coordination with the Vice-president for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice-presidents, as well as the School Deans<sup>2</sup> and College Directors are regularly invited to participate in the meetings of the EPFL Direction in an advisory capacity.

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<sup>1</sup> [RS 414.110.37](#)

<sup>2</sup> In the remainder of the text, the term "School Dean" also includes "College Directors".

<sup>8</sup> The Direction may appoint members of the Office of the Presidency to participate in the meetings of the EPFL Direction in an advisory capacity.

<sup>9</sup> When taking decisions, the Direction may rely on the recommendations provided by EPFL committees, including the “Academic Strategic Committee” and the “Risk Management Committee”.

#### **Article 4 EPFL Direction Responsibilities**

<sup>1</sup> The EPFL Direction has the following responsibilities:

- a. it adopts the ordinances, regulations and directives of the EPFL, subject to the delegations of authority provided for in this Ordinance;
- b. it adopts the rules and regulations concerning the organisation of EPFL Schools and Colleges, particularly upon the proposal of the School Dean(s);
- c. it approves the creation or discontinuation of Institutes, Laboratories, Chairs, and Centres, particularly upon the proposal of the relevant School Dean(s);
- d. it approves the creation and abolition of academic curricula, particularly upon the proposal of the relevant School Dean(s);
- e. it takes decisions in its capacity as an employer on behalf of EPFL personnel, upon the proposal of the Vice-president for Human Development (VPH);
- f. it ensures the participation of social partners within the units for all general matters relating to personnel;
- g. it appoints the other members of the Directions of the Schools and Colleges in accordance with the procedure defined under Art. 20 of this Ordinance;
- h. it appoints Associate Vice-presidents upon the proposal of the Vice-president for Academic Affairs;
- i. for each EPFL campus located outside the canton of Vaud, it appoints a Campus Committee upon the proposal of the Vice-president for Academic Affairs, and appoints a Director of Operations, upon the proposal of the Vice-president for Operations.
- j. it appoints the Vice Deans, as well as the Section, Institute and Centre Directors attached to the Schools upon the proposal of the relevant School Dean, and appoints the Directors of Doctoral programs upon the proposal of the Vice-presidency for Academic Affairs;
- k. it decides on the launch and funding of transversal strategic projects;
- l. it adopts the Risk Profile and ensures the efficiency of the Internal Controls System;
- m. it is responsible for Quality Assurance;
- n. it promotes respect, diversity, fairness, and inclusion as fundamental values within the EPFL community;
- o. it exercises its responsibilities with due regard for overall sustainability objectives;
- p. it defines a set of organisational regulations;
- q. it defines the organisational structure of the Support Services to the EPFL missions.

<sup>2</sup> At regular intervals, based on the topics addressed, it delegates one of its members to meet with the EPFL Assembly (AE), as well as with representatives of relevant groups of people within the School as specified in article 17 of the *Ordonnance sur l'EPFZ et l'EPFL*, including, in particular, the members of the teaching staff (CCE), and the students (AGEPoly).

## Chapter 2: The President

### Article 5 General Responsibility and Strategy

The President has the following general responsibilities; she or he :

- a. assumes overall responsibility for EPFL and reports on its management activities to the ETH Board;
- b. exercises the function of the Presidency of the EPFL Direction;
- c. is the hierarchical supervisor of the members of the Direction;
- d. determines the general strategy of EPFL, in collaboration, and with the approval of, the other members of the Direction and in alignment with the strategic planning of the ETH Domain;
- e. may delegate the tasks assigned to her/him by the higher legislative framework.

### Article 6 Budget and Finances

The President is responsible for allocating the resources provided for in the budget framework to the members of the EPFL Direction and the School Deans, after consultation with the members of the Direction.

### Article 7 Appointment and Departure of Professors

The President:

- a. appoints the School Deans in accordance with the procedure laid out in Article 21 of this Ordinance, after consultation with the Vice-president for Academic Affairs;
- b. with support from the Vice-president for Academic Affairs and specialist support from the Vice-presidency for Human Development, makes recommendations and proposals to the ETH Board for the appointment of professors and the awarding of academic credentials;
- c. may delegate the competencies set out under point b of this article to the Vice-president for Academic Affairs.

### Article 8 Additional Competencies

<sup>1</sup> The President is also responsible for:

- a. the EPFL Direction's activities, and particularly the meetings of the EPFL Direction;
- b. representing EPFL before other higher education institutions , authorities, political bodies and the public;
- c. strategic relations with institutional and philanthropic bodies based in Switzerland and abroad;
- d. maintaining relations with the EPFL Alumni community;
- e. piloting the international strategy of EPFL, including its international positioning and the implementation and management of international alliances;
- f. communicating on behalf of EPFL;
- g. legal affairs;
- h. ensuring respect for good scientific practice and ethics;
- i. institutional and academic data.

<sup>2</sup> The President is responsible for all matters that are not explicitly assigned to the Direction or to one of its members.

### Article 9 Organisational Structure of the Presidency

<sup>1</sup> The President may establish an Office of the Presidency comprised of teams that provide their support to her or him in connection with all strategic and operational matters, both internally and externally, and that serve as an interface between the members of the Direction.

<sup>2</sup> The President determines the organisational structure of the Office of the Presidency.

## **Chapter 3: Other Members of the Direction**

### **Article 10 Vice-president for Academic Affairs (Provost / VPA)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-president for Academic Affairs acts as deputy for the President, who may delegate overall decision-making powers to the VPA. She or he represents EPFL in connection with academic affairs. She or he is responsible for all academic activities of EPFL as well as education at all levels. She or he directs inter-school academic activities, services for scientific information and support for research, training and technology transfer. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. support for research and teaching activities;
- b. support for technology transfer activities in collaboration with the Vice-presidency for Innovation and Impact;
- c. the implementation of academic strategy, particularly in terms of recruitment and promotion of professors with specialist support from the Vice-presidency for Human Development ;
- d. awarding the title of Senior Scientist (MER) and the appointment of lecturers in accordance with the relevant directives (LEX 4.4.3 and LEX 4.3.1);
- e. the funding of research through internal or third-party funds, particularly the approval of corresponding commitments (contracts, letters of support);
- f. representing EPFL before political, research and teaching bodies;
- g. the management and coordination of all student activities including, with the support of the Vice-presidency for Human Development and the Vice-presidency for Operations, those related to student well-being;
- h. negotiations with new professors concerning start-up funds and teaching contributions, in collaboration with the Deans and Vice-presidencies concerned;
- i. scientific information and libraries;
- j. (Centres) the operational and academic management of inter-institutional bodies and technological platforms for research, in collaboration with the Vice-presidency for Support to Strategic Initiatives;

<sup>3</sup> She or he is also responsible for:

- a. the implementation of transversal strategic projects relating to the responsibilities listed in paragraph 2, points a. to j. of this article;
- b. conducting periodic appraisals of the professors based on the Deans' recommendations.

<sup>4</sup> She or he is the hierarchical supervisor of the School Deans and the College Directors.

<sup>5</sup> She or he may propose the appointment of Associate Vice-presidents to the Direction, including, in particular:

- a. an Associate Vice-president for Education (AVP-E)
- b. an Associate Vice-president for Doctoral and Lifelong Education (AVP- DLE)
- c. an Associate Vice-president for Research (AVP-R)
- d. an Associate Vice-president for Centres and Platforms (AVP-CP)

<sup>6</sup> The Associate Vice-presidents are EPFL professors. The Vice-president for Academic Affairs may delegate to the Associate Vice-presidents the competencies arising from the areas of responsibility described in paragraphs 2 and 3, point a. of this article.

<sup>7</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations.

### **Article 11 Vice-president for Support to Strategic Initiatives (VPS)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-president for Support to Strategic Initiatives (VPS) implements and develops transversal strategic actions relating to the sustainability of major societal, economic, scientific and environmental issues by capitalising on the strength of the institution's three academic pillars (Teaching, Research, Innovation). Her or his activities are linked to interdisciplinary fields and are implemented in collaboration with the other Vice-presidencies, the Schools, the Academic Strategic Committee, and third-party institutions with complementary competencies. Steering of the actions includes fundraising for financing strategic initiatives. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. translating EPFL's long-term vision into action plans, in particular in collaboration with the Vice-presidency for Academic Affairs and the Vice-presidency for Innovation and Impact;
- b. coordinating and strengthening inter-institutional academic topics requiring close collaboration and synergy within the institution, including the Schools and all EPFL campuses, within the ETH Domain, and with other academic institutions;
- c. integrating into the EPFL community all actions and initiatives relating to sustainability, including the overall climate strategy.

<sup>3</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations.

### **Article 12 Vice-president for Innovation and Impact (VPI)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-president for Innovation and Impact develops and fosters relations between EPFL and the business community (particularly by running activities aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship), society and public institutions across the three main academic fields (Teaching, Research, and Innovation), in coordination with the Presidency. She or he directs the promotional activities for education, science, research, and innovation. She or he coordinates discussions with society and industry concerning the impact and commercialisation of technological innovations. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. supporting promotional activities for education, science, research and innovation;
- b. coordinating and facilitating discussions between EPFL on the one hand and society and industry on the other in terms of the impact, exploitation and transference of technological innovations, in collaboration with the Vice-presidency for Academic Affairs and the Vice-presidency for Support to Strategic Initiatives;
- c. liaison with the industrial community;
- d. the promotion and development of innovation parks on different EPFL sites. She or he represents EPFL before the corresponding governance bodies;

<sup>3</sup> She or he is responsible for the implementation of transversal strategic projects relating to the responsibilities listed under points a. to d. of paragraph 2 of this article.

<sup>4</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations.

### **Article 13 Vice-presidency for Human Development (VPH)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-presidency for Human Development is responsible for defining and implementing the academic, scientific, administrative, and technical personnel policy. She or he ensures the development of skills and careers for all EPFL-campus personnel, whilst promoting their well-being. She or he is responsible for ensuring the implementation of, and compliance with, human resources

legislation, whilst fostering a career-development culture. She or he supports the Presidency, the Vice-presidencies, the Schools and the various Services throughout the recruitment, appointment and promotion processes for all EPFL personnel. She or he promotes and supports initiatives aimed at facilitating implementation of the personnel policy. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. the management of EPFL personnel in collaboration with the relevant unit heads;
- b. the equal opportunity policy and its development;
- c. training, development and support for career advancement for all personnel;
- d. conflict prevention and providing support in the area of conflict resolution and complaints management.

<sup>3</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations

#### **Article 14 Vice-president for Finances (VPF)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-president for Finances manages and plans all resources allocated to teaching, research, innovation and services. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. preparing and monitoring the annual budget as well as planning long-term financial requirements;
- b. financial accounting and bookkeeping in accordance with the ETH Board guidelines;
- c. the investment of surplus liquid assets within the framework of the investment policy, as well as for maintaining funding sources;
- d. the procurement strategy and the management of calls for tenders for goods and services in close collaboration with the requesting units and in compliance with legislation on public procurement;
- e. risk assessment and the maintenance of property and civil liability insurance policies;
- f. maintenance of the internal controls system and audit coordination with the competent authorities.

<sup>3</sup> She or he is responsible for the implementation of transversal strategic projects relating to the responsibilities listed in paragraph 2, letters a. to f. of this article.

<sup>4</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations.

#### **Article 15 Vice-president for Operations (VPO)**

<sup>1</sup> The Vice-president for Operations is responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of the various EPFL campuses. This includes, in particular, supervision of the security, development, operations and sustainability of the infrastructure and information systems, as well as catering facilities. In collaboration with other vice-presidencies, he or she is responsible for the development of transversal actions with the objective of establishing and operating intelligent and sustainable campuses. She or he has the corresponding decision-making powers.

<sup>2</sup> She or he is responsible for:

- a. occupational health, physical safety and digital security;
- b. technical infrastructure, moveable and immovable assets and outdoor spaces;
- c. digital infrastructure and information systems;
- d. catering facilities.

<sup>3</sup> She or he is responsible for the implementation of transversal strategic projects relating to the responsibilities listed in paragraph 2, points a. to d. of this article.

<sup>4</sup> She or he directs the operations of all EPFL campuses.

<sup>5</sup> She or he allocates financial resources within the framework of the Vice-presidency's budgetary allocations.

## **Section 3    *Schools and Colleges***

### **Article 16    Definition and Tasks**

<sup>1</sup> Schools are teaching and research units. They report to the EPFL Direction.

<sup>2</sup> They establish a strategy for research and commercialisation in collaboration with the Vice-presidency for Academic Affairs, the Vice-presidency for Support to Strategic Initiatives and the Vice-presidency for Innovation and Impact.

<sup>3</sup> They are responsible for education and for supporting the Sections within the framework of the School's internal teaching programmes. The Schools provide teaching in other programmes at all levels.

<sup>4</sup> The Section is responsible for implementing the academic curricula leading to the Bachelor and Master degrees respectively.

<sup>5</sup> The Schools encourage and support transdisciplinary initiatives in collaboration with other Schools and academic institutions.

<sup>6</sup> The Schools are responsible for human and financial resources management within the limits of their budgetary allocations.

### **Article 17    List of Schools**

EPFL comprises the following Schools:

- a.    Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering (ENAC);
- b.    Computer and Communication Sciences (IC);
- c.    Engineering (STI);
- d.    Basic Sciences (SB);
- e.    Life Sciences (SV).

### **Article 18    Organisational structure**

<sup>1</sup> A School's organisational structure comprises the School Direction, School Council, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Services.

<sup>2</sup> Institutes are composed of Chairs and Laboratories.

<sup>3</sup> The School Council, comprising an equal number of representatives from each group, is chaired by the School Dean.

### **Article 19    Colleges**

EPFL comprises the College of Humanities and the College of Management of Technology. Provisions governing the Schools apply by analogy to Colleges, insofar as the latter are not governed by other specific legal provisions.

### **Article 20    School Direction**

<sup>1</sup> Schools are headed by a School Dean.

<sup>2</sup> The other members of the School Direction are appointed by the EPFL Direction on the proposal of the School Dean, whose proposal must first be approved by the School Council.

<sup>3</sup> In principle, the term of office of the Dean and other members of the School Direction is renewable once.

### **Article 21    Appointment of School Deans**

The School Dean is appointed for a term of four years by the EPFL President, on the proposal of an appointments committee mandated by the EPFL President, in which each group of the School's members is represented by a member designated by the School Council concerned.

## **Article 22 School Members**

The following persons are subject to the authority of the School to which they are attached:

- a. teaching staff;
- b. assistants, scientific staff, and doctoral candidates;
- c. students and auditeurs enrolled at EPFL;
- d. administrative and technical staff.

## **Section 4 EPFL Assembly**

### **Article 23 EPFL Assembly's Definition and Role**

<sup>1</sup> The EPFL Assembly, as defined in Article 18 of the *Ordonnance sur l'EPFZ et l'EPFL*, is the highest participatory body .

<sup>2</sup> It ensures that all EPFL members may participate. In particular, it ensures the correct functioning of the School Councils and the smooth progress of consultations organised by the EPFL Direction.

<sup>3</sup> It submits proposals to the EPFL Direction.

## **Section 5 Centres**

### **Article 24 Definitions**

<sup>1</sup> A Centre is attached to an EPFL School if its principal activity falls within the scope of the activities of a single School. It is subject to the responsibility of the Dean and its governance is defined in consultation between the EPFL Direction and the Dean concerned.

<sup>2</sup> A Centre, as a transdisciplinary unit, is attached to a Vice-presidency. Its main mission is to pool together scientific expertise around societal, scientific, and technological topics important to the EPFL's position. Its governance and life cycle are defined by the EPFL Direction.

## **Section 6 Support Services**

### **Article 25 Definition**

Support Services carry out administrative and technical tasks, as well as operational and support tasks for teaching, research and innovation for the EPFL as a whole.

They are attached to the Presidency and the Vice-presidencies according to the undertaken activities.



## **Section 7    *Final Provision***

### **Article 26    Abrogation and Entry into Force**

This Ordinance entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, status as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025, version 1.11.

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

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