

N/réf : SW/AR

Procès-Verbal de la 339^{ème} séance de l'Assemblée d'Ecole du mardi 16 mai 2023

Présences Aleksandra Radenovic, Ens
Antoine Hoffmann, CI
Antoine Moix, E
Basile Morier, E
Consuelo Antille, CAT
Evangelos Belias, CI
Frédéric Dreyer, CAT
Marcia Gouffon, CAT
Marco Picasso, Ens
Pamina Winkler, CI
Sandrine Gerber, Ens
Tugdual Kerjan, E

Kristin Becker, Déléguée des 2 AE au CEPF
Sabrina Wuilleret, Assistante administrative AE

Excusé Franz-Josef Haug, Ens
Marta Divall, CAT

Absences Louis Bardel, E
Maria Sivers, CI
Frédéric Rauss, Mediacom

Ordre du jour

Membres AE ; la séance débute à 12h15

- Accueil
- Adoption de l'ordre du jour
- Adoption du PV de la séance 338
- Discussion avec notre Déléguée au CEPF
- Communications du Bureau de l'AE
- Consultations
- Divers et propositions du jour

Membres AE et Invité (12.15-14.15)

- Echange avec Prof. Michael Hengartner (Président du Conseil des EPF), 12h15-12h45
 - Echange avec Anna Fontcuberta i Morral (AVP for Centers and Platforms), 13h15-14h15
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1. Accueil

Séance en hybride ouverte à 12h15 par Aleksandra Radenovic, Présidente de l'AE.

2. Adoption de l'ordre du jour

L'ordre du jour est adopté.

3. Adoption des PVs 338 et de la séance extraordinaire du 20 avril

Les PVs ne sont pas aboutis pour l'instant.

4. Discussion avec notre Déléguée au CEPF

Domain meeting of April 19, 2023

Budget allocation 2024

A cut of 2% is announced for the next 4 years, to be distributed on a linear basis. A definitive decision will only be made in fall, after the discussion in parliament.

ERI Message 2025-2028

A consultation of the offices has taken place, the general consultation will be started before summer - it is important that both School assemblies react – the same arguments as used already in the letter to FC Parmelin can be used. The budget increase will probably be less than 2%, less than e.g. for SNF or Innosuisse. As already mentioned, the difficulty in the discussion with politics and administration is the fact that the domain and especially ETH still has relatively high reserves.

Other

Study based on a survey conducted among researchers of ETH and UniZH by Margrit Osterloh & Katja Rost, two professors from University of Zurich: "Leaky Pipeline in der Wissenschaft"

Before being published, one of the two authors revealed some of the results to journalists. Several media (Sonntagszeitung, Tagesanzeiger, NZZ) then published articles with titles like: "women prefer a successful husband instead of making a career" and "Family makes many women happy - this has nothing to do with discrimination".

Reactions to these biased statements were numerous and strong, also by men (e.g. maenner.ch). Julia Dannath (VP ETH) published a statement, Dagmar Iber was interviewed by the Sonntagsblick and the Women Professor Forum published an open letter. It's not so much the study itself which is criticized, but the interpretations made by the authors and by the media.

5. Communication du Bureau AE

- DIALOG 2023.06.21: Topics: Theme for ETH Zurich & EPFL Institutional Growth; Development of student numbers and maintaining the quality of education; Europe. Draft of slides TBC by AE members.
- Suivi avec la Direction de la situation dans les cafétérias de l'EPFL – RESCO : Aleksandra se renseigne sur la possibilité de créer un fonds (financé par des dons) pour subventionner une alimentation saine et durable pour les étudiants (y compris les doctorants).
- Outstanding commitment award 2023: Mediacom will inform the community by the end of May that subscription form is open. The AE members part of the commission are Marco, Maria, Antoine M., Frédéric + President : Aleksandra.
- Vivapoly: AE will animate a stand. Pamina is leading the organization, with strong support of Antoine H. Banners and flyers will be printed next week.

6. Consultation

- Révision de l'Ordonnance concernant l'admission à l'EPFL, LEX 2.1.0.1 - GT : Pamina, Antoine M. Marcia, Aleksandra (Deadline 06.06.2023)
- Lancement le 23.05 : nouvelle LEX Professors of Practice (LEX PoP) - GT : TBD (Deadline 31.08.2023).

7. Divers et propositions du jour

Informations sent in May to AE members by electronic channels:

- The two School Assemblies (Hochschulversammlung & Assemblée d'école) jointly wrote and sent a letter to the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SEFRI – M. Parmelin) to express their concerns about the planned budget cut decided concerning the ETH Domain and asked to reconsider this decision with regard to the medium- and long-term consequences on teaching and research.
- Strategic plan 2025-2028: following the D2 meeting of 7 February, it was decided to constitute 9 working groups that will define the scope of each strategic area. In parallel, each School, College, and the School Assembly (if applicable), should prepare their own Strategic Plan (max. 5 pages).
- Student elections to EPFL Assembly, to the Faculty Councils and Colleges (CDM and CDH): registration is open until 19.05.2023. The CDH (College of Humanities) creates a Council for the first time. It will be in a transitional launch phase from 01.09.2023 to 31.08.2024. CDH students have been included in the current elections. The associations will be responsible for appointing the members related to the 3 other Bodies (CAT, CENS, CI).

Note after session: no nominations were submitted among the CDH students. AGEPoly will therefore need to take steps to nominate 3 students.

8. Echange avec Prof. Michael Hengartner, Président du Conseil des EPF

Purpose of the visit: EPFL presidency recruitment process: get AE inputs and recommendations regarding the search process and the type of leader that would be best able to lead EPFL for the coming decade.

- **Présentation** (*Powerpoint attached*)
ETH Board based on the input of the EPFL deans suggests that the EPFL Assembly organizes a Town hall. AE members will vote soon to make a decision.

Note after session: a Town hall with the EPFL community has been organized on June 2nd 2023 at EPFL.




- **AE members' recommendations:**
 - We need a person that brings unity to a divided campus (build trust).
 - We need someone who will install the culture where people are guided through encouragement rather than concerns and caution.
 - Someone who inspires loyalty and a sense of belonging to the EPFL community.
 - We need someone who cares and can inspire and lead while also serving the greater good.
 - Someone with high international visibility, scientific qualities, and has proven his/her leadership qualities.
 - Person with a proven track record in fostering transparency, inclusiveness, sustainability.
 - A dedicated person ready to clean the management of the institution, make it more direct, less layers, and come back to good sense managing-wise. We are now lost in an obscure way of decision making, too long ways, too complicated rules, and many redundant services.
 - Someone who does not totally delegate the internal management but participates to elaborate it, decide on the priorities and lead the institution with that.
 - Someone who trusts the EPFL personnel at all levels and who is ready to involve them in decision-making processes.
 - A person with a real vision.
 - A person capable of communicating across age groups, backgrounds and in English, French and German.
 - A person with strong ties to the Swiss political landscapes, industry and also with ties to the EU.
 - A person who is willing to listen to the needs, wishes and ideas of the whole EPFL community and genuinely wants to improve them.
 - Une personne qui a une approche et un impact local.
 - Une personne externe ou interne EPFL ? A voir selon le Town hall.

- Introduction of easy to be followed procedures, in order to create efficiency and homogeneity across EPFL.
- Here are some points raised by the Intermediary Body through an email from ACIDE:
 - What measures are taken in order to make the recruitment process as transparent as possible, particularly in matters of diversity and equity?
 - In the same way, would it be possible to have the list of candidates before the election?
 - Would it be possible to meet the candidates and ask questions about concrete topics ?
 - For the election of Prof. Martin Vetterli, this [report](#) mentions that the CEPF added two professors and two members of the EPFL Strategic Advisory Board to the selection committee. Was the Intermediary Body represented there? Will it be represented for this election?
 - Could we create a list of questions to be addressed to the candidates?
- **About the requirement profile of the next president**
 - *Ability to set priorities in scientific, technological and social issues and to set a strategic course-* This is very vague and could be more precise by mentioning explicitly actual topics of concerns (climate change, equity of chances, open science, ethics and consequence of research)
 - *High degree of social competence, assertiveness, and collegiality, proven negotiation skills and fundraising capabilities, ability to resolve conflicts, gender awareness-* Fighting discrimination, sexism and harassment is missing. It would be better to separate it into another point instead of mixing “fundraising” with “conflicts” and “harassment”.
 - En français, “forte aptitude à s'imposer” sonne très dominant. “Forte aptitude à rassembler” serait mieux.

9. Echange avec Anna Fontcuberta i Morral, Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms

Questions and answers:

- MD: How do we ensure that projects, which heavily rely on platform tools, are charged at a rate, which is sustainable for the group. EG. CMI has internal and external rates for users. Fabrication costs are often not covered by funding agencies and still to complete a research project a student might produce a bill of 7kCHF/month! Could groups eg. apply for funding to develop certain processes and recipes, instead of applying only for equipment?
 - [PATTs and profs in need can ask for support to the deans \(how much of this claim is based on the general needs and how much is based on personal/particular experience\).](#)
 - [Cost management is imposed and follows SNSF regulations](#)
 - [Good idea. Remember platform interdisciplinary fund of last year that funded platform development projects.](#)
 - [With respect of using ECO funds, beware of Requip disappearing in jan 2025](#)
 - [Future retreat of CMI will discuss the 5 year vision, any user can reach out to board members to provide feedback.](#)
- MD: We are encouraging shared platforms more and more. How do we ensure continuing maintenance and financial support for these? ('nobody's child')
 - [Not sure what you mean with 'nobody's child', please elaborate](#)
 - [Platforms are managed by an executive and academic director and followed by a steering committee. The steering committee is the bottom up organ that represents the interests of the users. There is an annual user assembly as well.](#)
 - [EPFL has many platforms, several of them within a faculty and thus not managed by VPA. Still, functioning principles remain.](#)

- Among the 6 platforms managed by VPA, the business models are remarkably different due to their different nature. In general, there is a high level of funding that comes from VPA through annual and long term funds (ECO). Give numbers: CPG (12M, 7M brought by direct fees)
 - Most FTEs paid by EPFL and not users. Platforms have an envelope as labs have. This usually evolves with the size of the platform. Example: CIME: 96%: 1,5M, SCITAS 100% of operational staff 1,6M, CMI 64%: 1,8M
 - Advantages of sharing knowledge, maintenance and equipment in platforms: savings in terms of personnel in the labs (we could not afford more than 1 permanent scientist)
 - Costs related to master and semester projects (4000 and 2000 CHF respectively) correspond to a total amount of 150k.
 - Confidential platform book brought to AE members during the session.
- AR: Can you elaborate how AVP Centers and Platforms helps scientific staff in planning the next steps in their professional development?
- Policy of CDI/CDD , always close discussion between direction of platform and VPA/RH, depending on platform 1 to 2 meetings per year to evaluate this.
 - Service as a value for staff of platforms
 - Example of career in CMI:
 -  **Process engineer – Team Leader - CMI**
EPFL CMI
Jan 2020 - Present · 3 yrs 5 mos
Lausanne, Vaud, Suisse
 -  **Process Integration Coordinator chez EPFL-CMI**
EPFL
2017 - Dec 2019 · 3 yrs
 -  **Section Head Etch**
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
May 2000 - Sep 2017 · 17 yrs 5 mos
 - Certain platforms allow some staff to have a 20%research in the CdC to make sure they stay at the forefront of the techniques and that they can further develop techniques with the instrumentation. They have the possibility of MER (two types: usual MER and linked to platform). They can in principle submit project funding if it is related to the platform interests.
- The rules on Centers had been revised, but we have never been consulted on creation and on closing centers, as the process was detailed in the rules.
- It seems that one of our members is curious about the potential for seeking input from the AE/EPFL community regarding the closure or opening of the centers. He/She would like to know how realistic this idea is and if it's possible to elaborate on the decision-making process involved in such cases.
- LEX on centers establishes that lifetime of a center is 12 years with evaluations every 4 years. At the end of the 12 years a new vision needs to be submitted if the center wants to continue (new proposal).
 - Evaluations constitute constructive feedback. In case reviewers point out to significant issues, they need to be addressed.

- What are the evaluation criterias and objectives to reach for EPFL Centers?
 - As professors, centers should contribute to 2 of the 3 pillars of EPFL.
 - Centers should be sustained bottom up by profs. They should make a difference. If they do not, then no need of them. **Dialogue is the base.**
 - Examples of closed centers (no prof wanted to be involved or solely company relations): IRGC, Digital Humanities, TRACE transferred to VPI. Here I describe the process.
 - Examples of renewed centers with great success : Bernoulli, EcoCloud.

- SG: The access to state-of-the-art instrumentation and highly qualified staff in the platforms is certainly one of the strengths of EPFL, which can make a difference when we are recruiting new faculty members. The invoicing policy that EPFL is implementing will more and more become unaffordable for many research units (research costs linked to the acquisition of raw materials, consumables, etc. have drastically increased and the budget of the research units will undergo drastic cuts from 2024). In such situation, the attractiveness of EPFL might decrease (in addition to other factors such as the exclusion from the EU funding schemes). Would it be possible to redirect part of the R-ECO/VPA budget dedicated to the acquisition of scientific equipment to the running of these platforms and therefore decrease the load on the research units?
 - I would like to understand where the statement of drastically increase comes from. Pricing is stable and proportional to use. There has been a drastic change in pricing only: scitas divided by 2, we are working on keeping this sustainable.

- *(Dumb question) It is very hard to follow the organization of the Centers & Platforms because of the chaotic nomenclature: why are more than the half of the platforms called "center" (Centre d'imagerie Dubochet, Centre de MicroNanoTechnologie, Centre interdisciplinaire de microscopie électronique, Centre de recherche en imagerie biomédicale) and why the Swiss Plasma Center is not considered as a center?*
 - *Fully agreed!*
 - *SPC is a platform of international standing.*