

ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

2024 REPORT



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CONTACT INFORMATION

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PREFACE

We are pleased to present our 2024 activity report in a slightly altered format.

We are able to look back upon a very eventful and successful year.

In April, Samuel Bon assumed the CEO chair from Roger Schmid: after serving in this capacity for 28 years, Schmid will continue serving the Ernst Göhner Foundation in the capacity of vice-chair of the foundation board. By the same token, Daniel Hübscher assumed the role of the Foundation's CFO in summer. There were also a number of staff

changes in the Foundation's subsidiaries, specifically: Franz Studer succeeding Dominik Sauter at EGS Beteiligungen Ltd.

In 2024, DSV A/S — in which the Ernst Göhner Foundation holds its most sizable stake in terms of value — negotiated the acquisition of DB Schenker logistics subsidiary from Deutsche Bahn, marking the most successful acquisition in the company's history. The financial markets have reacted very positively to this development.

In 2024, our investee company EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. (EGSB) acquired a majority stake in SERTO AG. Headquartered in Frauenfeld, SERTO operates at the international level, specializing in the development, manufacture, sales and marketing of tube union systems for liquids and gases. EGSB also increased its stakes in Interroll Holding Ltd., Comet Holding Ltd. and Siegfried Holding Ltd.

In 2024, the Ernst Göhner Foundation's real estate company — Seewarte Holding Ltd. — continued expanding and enhancing the value of its portfolio by way of purchases and development projects. The building complex of the new residential/commercial property at Obermühleweid 1 in Cham was completed. A modern residential housing development in Thalwil was completed with three multi-family buildings: This is Seewarte's first property that is certified to the all-encompassing SNBS Silver Seal of Quality (SNBS = Swiss Sustainable Building Standard).

We were also able to expand our charitable work during the year under review:

In 2024, the Foundation approved funding totaling CHF 53.1 million for 1,929 projects. Since its founding in 1957, the Foundation has supported over 38,500 projects with well over CHF 804 million.

ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

FOUNDER

Ernst Göhner (1900–1971)

FOUNDED

1957

PURPOSE

Corporate, charitable and family foundation

CORPORATE HOLDINGS

Sectors include: Logistics, Real Estate, Construction & Tech Industries, Industry 4.0 and Health Care

AREAS OF FUNDING & SUPPORT

Education & Science, Culture, the Environment, and Social projects

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Regulatory Board for Occupational Pension Plans and Foundations of Central Switzerland

REGISTERED OFFICE /

ADDRESS / WEBSITE

Artherstrasse 19, 6300 Zug



ernst-goehner-stiftung.ch

Finally, the Foundation hosted another annual event for the family beneficiaries in summer, which took place in Geneva. Visits were made to CERN’s Science Gateway and the museum of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Foundation supporting both of these institutions.

We would like to express a word of thanks to all our staff for their tireless and motivated dedication.

The Ernst Göhner Foundation moves things!

We hope you’ll enjoy reading what has been going on in the Foundation.

Dr. Beat Walti
Chairman of the Foundation Board

Samuel Bon
CEO

SWISSFOUNDATIONS

SwissFoundations, the Association of Grant-Making Foundations, is a network dedicated to the continued development of foundations in Switzerland. It was established in 2001 by eleven foundations, including the Ernst Göhner Foundation, and stands for transparency, professionalism, and the efficient, impactful use of foundation assets.

In 2005, SwissFoundations published its first governance code for grant-making foundations in Europe: *SwissFoundations Code — Principles and Recommendations for the Establishment and Management of Grant-Making Foundations*. 2021 marked the fourth edition.

The Ernst Göhner Foundation is actively engaged in the executive board and the working groups of SwissFoundations and, together with other member foundations, funds various collaborative projects.

SwissFoundations is also a co-initiator of CEPS: the designated purpose of this research and continuing education center for philanthropy and foundations is to significantly improve the understanding of the fundamentals and the transfer of knowledge about philanthropy. Cofunded by the Ernst Göhner Foundation, the center opened its doors in 2008, and today has the status of an independent university institute at the University of Basel.



swissfoundations.ch

FOUNDATION BODIES

FOUNDATION BOARD

Dr. Beat Walti (chair)
 Dr. Roger Schmid (vice-chair)
 Giacomo Balzarini
 Prof. Dr. Christoph Franz
 Mark Furger
 Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller
 Prof. Dr. Michael Hengartner
 Dr. Monika Krüsi
 Isabel Kühnlein Specker
 (representative of the
 family beneficiaries)

COMMITTEES

Finance Committee

Chair: Dr. Beat Walti

DSV Committee

Chair: Dr. Monika Krüsi

Organization and HR Committee

Chair: Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller

Audit & Risk Committee

Chair: Mark Furger

Donations Committee

Chair: Prof. Dr. Christoph Franz

Family Beneficiaries

Chair: Isabel Kühnlein Specker



Foundation board (back, standing, from left to right): Giacomo Balzarini, Roger Schmid, Beat Walti, Christoph Franz, Monika Krüsi, Mark Furger, Isabel Kühnlein Specker, (front, seated, from left to right): Thomas Gutzwiller, Michael Hengartner



Office (from left to right): Michaela Gasser, Katharina Schillen, Daniel Hübscher, Lucia Tellenbach, Elvira Hammer, Anna Bürgi, Martha Müller, Suzanne Avedik, Natalie Rossi, Patricia Kopp, Tanja Vogel, Corinne Wegmüller, Sonja Hägeli, Corinne Linda Sotzek, Samuel Bon

OFFICE

Dr. Roger Schmid (CEO, until 3/2024)

Samuel Bon (CEO, from 4/2024)

Daniel Hübscher (CFO)

Dr. Suzanne Avedik (special projects)

Anna Bürgi (Performing Arts & Music, from 8/2024)

Michaela Gasser (Environment & Social projects)

Sonja Hägeli (Performing Arts & Literature, Heritage Conservation & Cultural History, until 9/2024)

Patricia Kopp (Education & Science)

Natalie Rossi (Social projects & Film)

Katharina Schillen (Music)

Dr. Corinne Linda Sotzek (Visual Arts & Preservation of Sites of Historic Interest)

Tanja Vogel (interdisciplinary cultural projects, cultural history & family beneficiaries)

Corinne Wegmüller (Performing Arts, Literature & Film, from 8/2024)

Elvira Hammer (office)

Martha Müller (office)

Lucia Tellenbach (office)

Claudia Uster (accounting)

ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

OFFICE — ASSET MANAGEMENT

Pursuant to the mission statement of its founder, the Ernst Göhner Foundation is tasked with managing its assets in accordance with business principles, exercising entrepreneurial initiative. It primarily invests in companies and real estate owing to their long-term horizon. The Foundation also has a portfolio of financial investments and provides venture capital for startups. Taking an active and sustainable approach in managing the Foundation's assets is designed to provide for above-average value growth and stable income to enable the continued, secure fulfillment of the Foundation's designated remit.

The largest stake (over 7%) in terms of value held by the Ernst Göhner Foundation is in DSV A/S, a publicly-listed Danish global transport and logistics service provider. In 2024, DSV A/S negotiated the acquisition of DB Schenker logistics subsidiary from Deutsche Bahn, marking the most successful acquisition in the company's history. The financial markets have reacted very positively to this development.

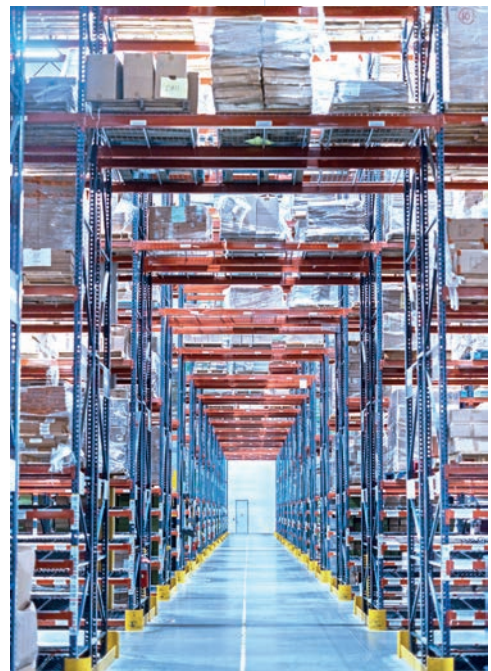
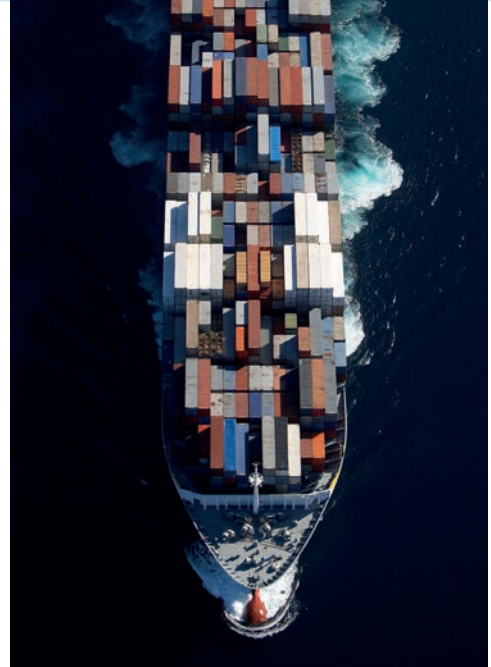
The Foundation has holdings in various other companies via its wholly-owned subsidiary EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. Real estate investments are made by Seewarte Holding Ltd., a company also wholly-owned by the Foundation. The members of the board of directors of both subsidiaries consist of foundation board members and external independent board members possessing the requisite expertise, professional experience and network of connections. The subsidiaries are presided over by a member of the foundation board.

The financial investments of the Foundation include the following asset classes: money market instruments, bonds, equities and gold. The Foundation's strategy with regard to financial investments — in which the primary focus is on the preservation of value — takes into account the opportunities and uncertainty concerning the prevailing economic climate and performance in financial markets. The financial investments are managed by various asset management specialists on a retainer basis.

The provision of venture capital for startups is done exclusively by way of collective investment vehicles. This also includes Kickfund — launched by the Ernst Göhner Foundation in tandem with the Gebert Rüb Foundation in their role as anchor investors. Kickfund's purpose is to invest in Swiss deep tech embodied by promising Swiss startups.



dsv.com



DSV A/S — overland freight forwarding, ocean & air freight, and logistics solutions

EGS BETEILIGUNGEN LTD. THE FOUNDATION'S COMPANIES

Pursuant to the founder's vision, EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. (EGSB) invests exclusively in publicly-listed and privately-held companies related to Switzerland. Enabled thanks to the stable funding provided by the Foundation and propelled by the sustained effort to achieve optimal quality, EGSB has established itself as a reliable investor in Switzerland and, during the past couple of years, has steadily expanded its portfolio by adding premium, top-performing companies.

The goal of the Ernst Göhner Foundation is to engage in sustainable social and economic value creation by way of long-term investments, which EGSB, the Foundation's investment company, enables.

EGSB invests in companies that stand out in their market segment by virtue of their leading position or possess the potential to do so. Following from EGSB's long-term investment horizon, the focus is on companies whose business activities are shaped by megatrends and offer sustainable growth prospects. By taking a portfolio approach, the goal is to strive for a balanced equilibrium. In its capacity of investor company, EGSB is broadly diversified across a number of industries.

Value creation is achieved by carefully selecting potential investee companies, conducting professional and specialized due diligence analyses, and structuring transactions.

While holding an investment, EGSB sits on the board of the investee in order to be actively involved in its performance and drive a sustained growth in value.

EGSB believes that upholding good governance principles has a positive impact on the performance of the investees over the long term. The principles not only affect the structural organization of the investee's management bodies but also the mindful selection of co-investors. In so doing, EGSB attaches particular importance not only to achieving a long-term investment horizon but also sharing a common system of values and high quality standards.

During the year under review, EGSB acquired a majority stake in SERTO AG. Headquartered in Frauenfeld, SERTO operates at the international level, specializing in the development, manufacture, sales and marketing of tube union systems for liquids and gases. SERTO AG's excellent position opens up significant opportunities for growth that are projected to be achieved in the next few years to come. Apart from former owners and directors, CIC Capital holds a minority stake.

As to the publicly-listed investments, the stake in Siegfried Holding Ltd. was increased from 5.1% to 7.2%. This was primarily achieved by exercising convertible bonds, enabling the company to contribute to funding the purchase of production sites in Spain. With its stake of 7.2%, EGSB is currently the largest shareholder and thus serves the company as an anchor investor.

After the decision in principle to expand its shareholding in Interroll Holding Ltd. last year, EGSB increased its stake from 3.9% to 6.8% by taking advantage of temporary price weaknesses in the wake of a decline in sales caused by an economic downturn to acquire further shares. Here, too, the goal is to further expand the stake and become established as an anchor investor.

ORGANIZATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller (chair)
Daniela Bosshardt
Dr. Monika Krüsi
Valentin Vogt
Dr. Beat Walti

OFFICE

Dominik Sauter (CEO until 3/2024,
senior advisor)
Dr. Franz Studer (CEO, from 4/2024)
David Kurmann (investment director)
Felipe Diehm (investment manager)
Urs Eberhard (CFO)
Christian Pfab (investment director,
from 10/2024)
Julia Hall (investment manager)
Flurin Issler (head of corporate
management accounting,
from 6/2024)
Roger Niggli (investment analyst,
from 4/2024)

REGISTERED OFFICE / ADDRESS / WEBSITE

Dufourstrasse 31, 8008 Zürich



[egs-beteiligungen.ch](https://www.egs-beteiligungen.ch)



EGSB board of directors (standing, from left to right): Valentin Vogt, Thomas Gutzwiller, Samuel Bon (CEO of EGS), (seated, from left to right): Daniela Bosshardt, Monika Krüsi, Beat Walti



EGSB office staff (standing, from left to right): Flurin Issler, Christian Pfab, Franz Studer, Roger Niggli, Felipe Diehm, (seated, from left to right): David Kurmann, Urs Eberhard, Julia Hall, Dominik Sauter

Through its Growth vehicle, EGSB has been investing in innovative growth companies since 2022. The focus is on fast-growing scale-ups that have already successfully established themselves in the marketplace and are projected to achieve their break-even point within 12 to 18 months. During 2024, EGSB used this vehicle to acquire a stake in Futurae Technologies Ltd., a company that develops and markets authentication solutions for financial service providers. EGSB also invested in SWISSto12 SA, a leading developer and manufacturer of components and systems for the space and communications industry. In so doing, the company was able to enter into significant satellite contracts on behalf of international telecoms companies.

There were a number of staff changes during 2024. In a long-planned passing of the baton, Franz Studer took over the role of CEO from Dominik Sauter. Sauter will continue to serve EGSB at a reduced pace by assuming a number of board memberships. EGSB's organization has also been expanded. Christian Pfab, executive board member, and Flurin Issler and Roger Niggli have joined the team.

As of the end of 2024, the Ernst Göhner Foundation / EGSB held the following stakes (listed according to the date of acquisition):

ESTABLISHED PRIVATELY-HELD COMPANIES



Bauwerk Group AG

Leading manufacturer of parquet flooring

Acquired: 2009

Stake: >50%



Paros Beteiligungen AG / ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS Holding AG

Leading provider of media tracking and analytics services

Acquired: 2019

Stake >10%



Seaking (International) Inc.

Leading provider of catering & galley installations for cruise ships

Acquired: 2019

Stake: <50%

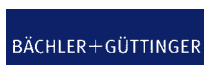


SpineArt SA

Developer and manufacturer of spinal implants

Acquired: 2020

Stake: <50%



B+G Schweiz AG / Bächler+Güttinger AG

Leading Swiss horticulture and landscape design & construction specialist

Acquired: 2021

Stake: <50%



Roth Gerüste Gruppe AG

Swiss market leader for special-purpose scaffolding

Acquired: 2021

Stake: >50%

**DV Bern Holding AG / DV Bern AG**

Developer of software solutions and IT service provider

Acquired: 2023

Stake: <50%

**SERTO Group AG**

International manufacturer of industrial fittings:
tube union systems for liquids and gases

Acquired: 2024

Stake: >50%

LISTED COMPANIES



Global Transport and Logistics

DSV A/S

Leading provider of logistics services

Acquired: 1969 / 2019

Stake: <10%

**Huber+Suhner Ltd.**

Leading manufacturer of electrical and fiber optic components
and system solutions for the transmission of data and energy

Acquired: 2011

Stake: <10%

**Sensirion Holding Ltd.**

Leading manufacturer of microsenors for the measurement
of liquids and gases

Acquired: 2018

Stake: <10%

**Siegfried Holding Ltd.**

Leading manufacturer of active chemical ingredients
for the pharmaceuticals industry

Acquired: 2018

Stake: <10%

**Comet Holding Ltd.**

Leading manufacturer of X-ray and RF power technologies and systems

Acquired: 2022

Stake: >3%

**Interroll Holding Ltd.**

Leading manufacturer of internal logistics products and services

Acquired: 2022

Stake: >5%

LATE-STAGE STARTUPS

**Beekeeper Holding Inc.**

Digital platform for linking front-line workers with existing company systems

Acquired: 2022

Stake: <5%

**Bcomp Ltd.**

Manufacturer of natural fiber reinforced plastic composites (NFRPs)

Acquired: 2023

Stake: <10%

**Futurae Technologies Ltd.**

Develops and markets authentication solutions for financial service providers

Acquired: 2024

Stake: <50%

**SWISSto12 SA**

Developer and manufacturer of components and systems for the space and communications industry

Acquired: 2024

Convertible loan/stake: <10%

SEEWARTE HOLDING LTD.

THE FOUNDATION'S REAL ESTATE PROPERTIES

The Foundation's real estate activities are consolidated in Seewarte Holding Ltd. The name Seewarte dates back to Seewarte AG, a real estate company acquired by Ernst Göhner for the Foundation in 1959 with its two commercial properties located in Zurich; the portfolio still contains these properties.

ORGANIZATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Giacomo Balzarini (chair)
Mark Furger
Kurt Ritz
Dr. Roger Schmid
Patrick Vogler

OFFICE

Thomas Regli (CEO)
Daniel Hübscher (CFO;
until 6/2024)
Philipp Fratschöl (CFO;
from 7/2024)
Markus Dammann (head of
construction project management)
Christian Eberle (construction
project management)
Alexander Stegmann (group
management accounting)
Marco Tanghetti (portfolio/
asset management)
Claudia Uster (accounting)

REGISTERED OFFICE / ADDRESS / WEBSITE

Artherstrasse 19, 6300 Zug



seewarte.ch

Seewarte is a real estate investor with a long-term perspective — with its premium-quality real estate portfolio consisting primarily of residential and commercial properties in prime locations in the economic area of Zurich, the properties possess a long-term growth and value appreciation potential. The portfolio consists of 27 residential properties with ca. 1,300 apartment units, six commercial buildings in the City of Zurich, a shopping center in Regensdorf, and a hotel in downtown Zurich. The real estate holdings are supplemented by a total of eight development projects that are concentrated in larger town centers being developed by Seewarte in Uster, Effretikon and Weiningen. Seewarte actively and professionally manages, maintains and develops its properties in proximity to its clientele and pursues a long-term approach. The focus is on sustainable preservation of value and achieving steady, predictable income. In so doing, Seewarte concentrates on its core competencies in portfolio and asset management and construction project expertise in developing and optimizing its properties. Management of the properties is done by service specialists.

In 2024, Seewarte succeeded in continuing its growth strategy by steadily enhancing the value of its portfolio. The complex formed by the new residential/commercial building at Obermühleweid 1 in Cham was completed. Result: almost 11,000 sq. ft. of sales and office space and 27 apartment rental units are now available. A modern housing development in Thalwil was completed with three multi-family residences and 44 rental apartment units.

This is Seewarte's first property that was certified according to the comprehensive SNBS Silver Seal of Quality. The upgrade and addition of floors to the residential/commercial building at Kreuzstrasse 82 in Zurich is proceeding according to plan so that the new office space will be available to Seewarte and EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. as a temporary base of operations. The registered office to date located at Dufourstrasse 29/31 in Zurich will be razed to the ground and replaced by a modern, high-quality office and residential building. Seewarte was able to purchase the E2 Hinterbüel West construction site located directly next to the train station in Effretikon. Plans have been made to construct a center consisting of a high-rise residential building featuring 106 units and sales and commercial space of almost 20,000 sq. ft. in size on the ground floor via a design-build procedure.

There has also been a major staff change: In July Philipp Fratschöl succeeded Daniel Hübscher as CFO, the latter changing to the Foundation.



Board of directors of Seewarte Holding Ltd. (from left to right):
Kurt Ritz, Giacomo Balzarini, Roger Schmid, Patrick Vogler and Mark Furger

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

At the core of the Seewarte Group's sustainability efforts: reduction of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, improving the regenerative, resource-preserving closed-loop economy, and promoting natural landscaping (native gardening) and biodiversity. Its goal for CO₂ emissions: achieve climate neutrality by 2040. Approximately one third of the Group's properties already achieve this goal today. The greenhouse gas intensity (scope 1 and 2) of all of Seewarte's investment properties currently amounts to 11.7 kg CO₂eq/m², i.e. significantly below the national Swiss average. This reflects the high portion of newly constructed or upgraded properties in the portfolio. Approximately one fourth of the total energy consumed is generated using renewable energy. In view of the foreseeable expansion of public district heat networks, most notably for the Zurich properties and the shopping center, this share will increase steadily and, as a result, CO₂ emissions further reduced.

The deliberate use of solar energy is realized in a majority of properties in the portfolio. In 2024, a ca. 33,000 sq. ft. photovoltaic array with 1,534 high-performance modules and a total power output of 674 kWp was constructed on the roof of the shopping center in Regensdorf, equating to the energy consumed by ca. 100 households.

Seewarte's construction projects are being completed in compliance with current sustainability standards, e.g. Minergie (registered quality label for new and upgraded low-energy-consumption buildings), SIA Energy Efficiency Path (SIA 2040) of the Swiss Society of Engineers and Architects, and the Swiss Sustainable Building Standard (SNBS).



Housing complex In Thalwil

With such ESG-compliant premium-value, future-proofed properties, Seewarte is making a contribution to ecological, social and economic sustainability. At the same time, Seewarte also fosters near-natural habitats and biodiversity in its portfolio. Six residential complexes featuring sizable outdoor spaces have been certified by the Nature and Economy Foundation.

At the core of its innovation efforts Seewarte collaborates with construction companies that are leaders in reusing recyclable construction materials, employing recycled concrete and wood structures, and applying digital technologies. In 2023, the multi-family residence at Streitholzstrasse 14 in Zurich, marked Seewarte's completion of its first hybrid wood building in which wood was used for the building envelope. In the ongoing addition of two residential floors to the residential/commercial building at Kreuzstrasse 82 in Zurich, the floors are featured as pure wood constructions. Digital technologies like building information technology (BIM) are being used in the design, planning and realization of the town center complex of the Gerichtsplatz square in Uster. BIM refers to a digital work method for networked planning and design, construction and management of buildings which is particularly suitable for large, complex construction projects. Seewarte focuses on innovation not only in construction projects but also in asset management. In the residential/commercial building located at Obermühleweid 1 in Cham completed in 2024, Seewarte created 18 favorably-priced rental apartment units. In so doing, Seewarte is making an active contribution to promoting affordable housing in the Canton of Zug. In the new construction project in Uster, some of the units are being created as flexible micro-apartments, whose floorplan can be adapted at any time to a tenant's requirements by way of movable modules, thus catering to the changing housing needs of urban dwellers.



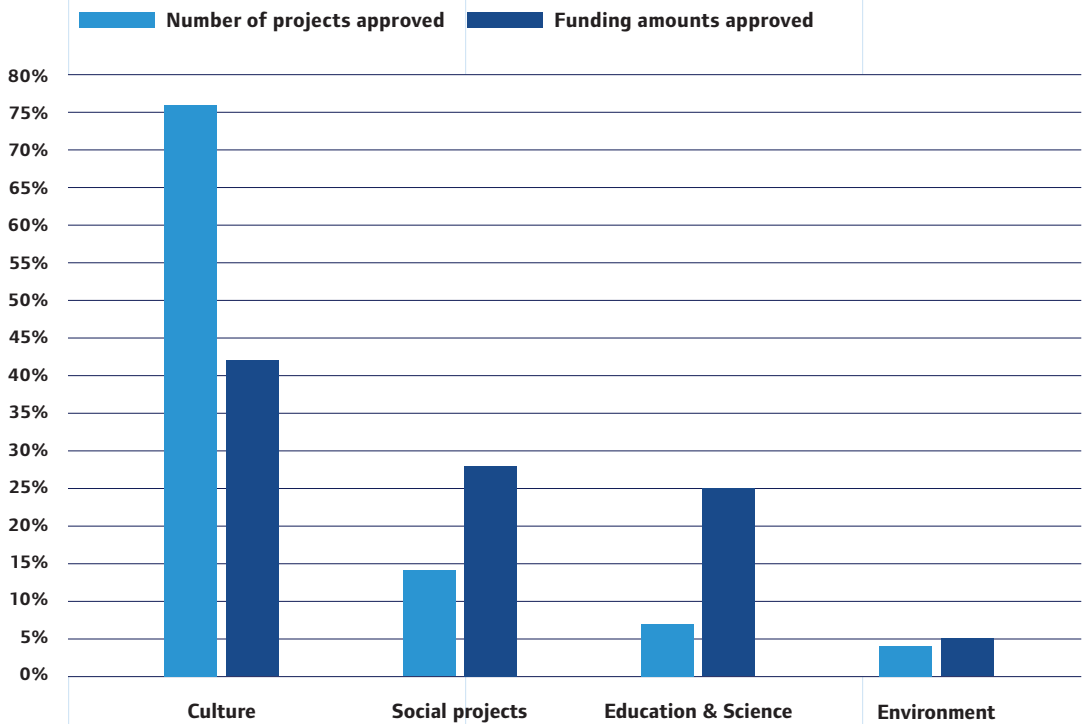
Office staff (from left to right): Alexander Stegmann, Thomas Regli, Marco Tanghetti, Claudia Uster, Markus Dammann, Philipp Fratschöl, Christian Eberle

OUR CHARITABLE WORK

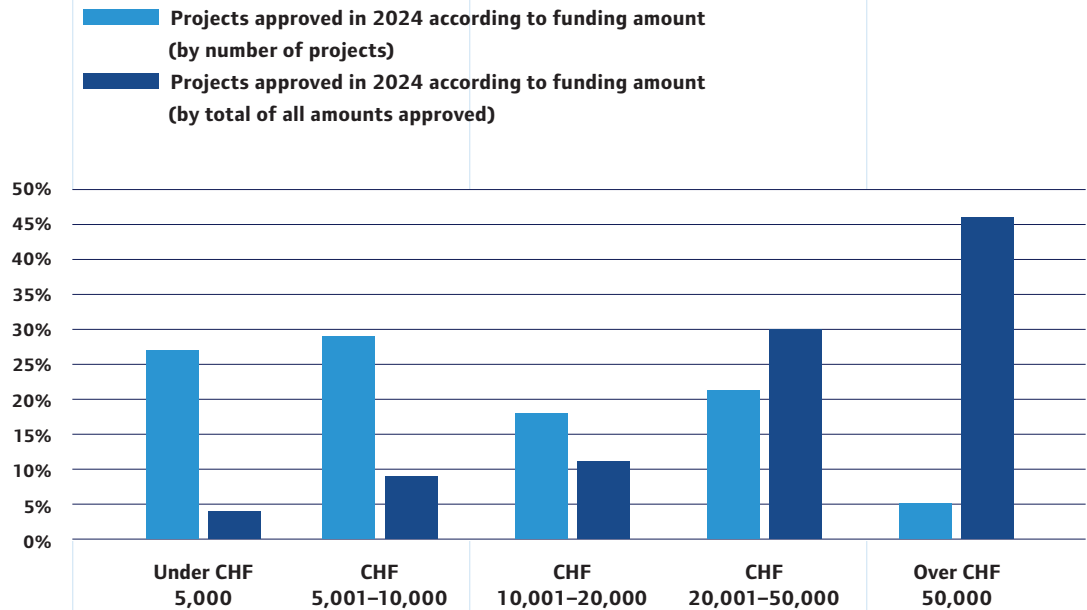
WELL OVER 1,900 PROJECTS SUPPORTED

In 2024, the Ernst Göhner Foundation approved funding totaling CHF 53.1 million for 1,929 projects. The minimum amount of disbursed funding established in the Foundation’s charter has thus been exceeded many times over. Since its founding in 1957, the Foundation has supported over 38,500 projects with well over CHF 804 million. For 2025, the foundation board has appropriated a budget of CHF 60 million.

Projects/amounts approved in 2024 according to area of funding and support



Projects/amounts approved in 2024 according to the amount of funding



According to the precepts of its charter, the Foundation fosters diversity and breadth as a matter of principle. This is reflected not only in the broad range of various areas supported but also in the varying size of the funding amounts disbursed.

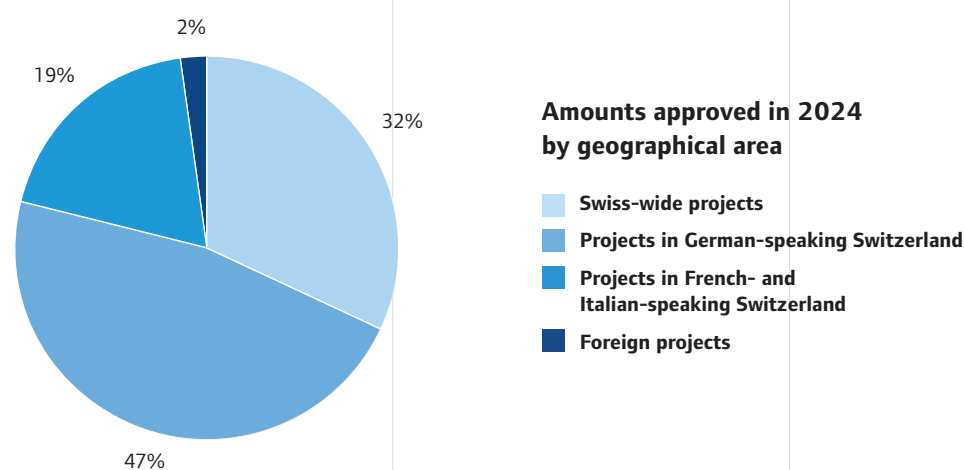
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The general criteria for the Ernst Göhner Foundation's funding and support activities are: quality, impact, sustainability, innovation and self-sufficiency, and orientation to societal needs. Support is provided in the form of funding in consultation and coordination with other funding organizations. In so doing, the Foundation does not assume any core tasks that are exclusively the remit of public funding, but rather provides supplementary funding or renders financial assistance in cases in which public authorities can be expected to participate at a later point in time.



Areas of Funding & Support

The Ernst Göhner Foundation is active throughout Switzerland. However, selected projects outside of Switzerland with an appropriate link to Switzerland or the Foundation’s entrepreneurial activities are also taken into consideration. In the past year 98% of all project funding approved was in Switzerland, compared to 2% of funding going toward projects outside of Switzerland. The regional distribution corresponds to the Ernst Göhner Foundation’s mission as a charitable foundation active throughout Switzerland, with appropriate account being taken of all areas of Switzerland.



STARTUPS — KICK FOUNDATION

The Foundation's most sizable project is the Venture Kick accelerator initiative, a pre-seed fund established in 2007 to promote the transfer of innovation and foster young entrepreneurs at Swiss institutions of higher learning. Since 2021, Venture Kick has been a component of the **Kick Foundation**, whose designated purpose is to strengthen the Swiss startup ecosystem by way of various philanthropic initiatives under the Kick program. To foster young talent at Switzerland's schools and institutions of higher learning, the Kick Foundation offers the following programs covering the innovation value chain:

Idea Kick helps college-prep school and vocational school students to transform into viable businesses the ideas and projects developed by them in national competitions like *Schweizer Jugend forscht* (Swiss Youth in Science), Young Enterprise Switzerland or Entrepreneur Skills. This initiative is coordinated with all the funding programs at schools, filling a visible gap in Switzerland, while enabling direct access to follow-up programs.

Talent Kick supports college students on their path to establishing their own company already while completing their degree. Interdisciplinary founder teams pursue a business idea, the successful teams receiving initial startup financing through Team Kick. This initiative has become a fixture at all institutions of higher learning within a short period of time; the program is offered twice a year on account of the considerable demand for it.

Finally, the **Venture Kick** accelerator program supports young business people with a "killer" business idea and entrepreneurial flair in achieving their specific goals by gaining access to investors and funding the development of their business.

Under Venture Kick, the best young entrepreneurs receive up to CHF 150,000 in seed funding in a three-round competition process. They are closely mentored in developing their business plan and benefit from visibility enhancement services and access to an international network of investors. Apart from the Ernst Göhner Foundation, the following foundations, companies and private individuals are involved in Venture Kick by providing financing and ideas: the Gebert Rűf Foundation, Hauser Foundation, Alcea Foundation, André Hoffmann, Hansjörg Wyss, Martin Haefner, Pro Techno Foundation, ESA BIC Switzerland, Swisscom, Lichtsteiner Foundation, and the Deeptech Nation Switzerland Foundation.

Since 2007, Venture Kick has selected 1,121 startup projects from among approximately 7,800 proposals received by it from Swiss institutions of higher learning and disbursed CHF 58 million in seed funding. These projects have resulted in a portfolio of



venturekick.ch

ca. 750 active startups, which have attracted ca. CHF 9 billion from investors and created more than 14,000 jobs. In 2024, 66 of the startups funded by Venture Kick were recipients of the Top 100 Swiss Startup Award.

The attractiveness of the Venture Kick accelerator program has been significantly enhanced: The winners of round 3 stand to receive an additional CHF 850,000 in funding from the newly established Kickfund. Profit-sharing returns from Kickfund provide a significant contribution to the sustainable funding of Venture Kick in the medium term.

2024 showed a return in excess of CHF 3 million, thus covering one third of the annual budget. Venture Kick envisions becoming self-sustaining by 2030, meaning funding will be enabled solely from the return generated by successful startups. Venture Kick pursues ambitious goals and anticipates increasing the number of funded projects to 3,000 by 2033. By pursuing this roadmap, 100,000 jobs will be created for Switzerland in innovative and future-proof industries.

KICKFUND

Kickfund is an innovative venture capital platform set up by the Ernst Göhner Foundation in tandem with the Gebert Rűf Foundation. Kickfund Ventures Fund I, the first fund domiciled in Luxembourg, was set up at the end of March 2024 with ca. CHF 73 million in venture capital pledges; it has a term of ten years. The investment strategy pursues a systematic approach which exclusively takes into consideration companies that have successfully completed the Venture Kick program, and unites the most promising high-tech companies in Switzerland in a portfolio. Domiciled in Basel, Kickfund Ltd., an investment manager licensed under FINMA, is responsible for the implementation of this strategy. The experienced team consists of CEO Wanjia Humanes (CFA) and CIO Thomas Möller (CPA).

Key developments and highlights in 2024:

Portfolio expansion and follow-up investments: establishment of a diversified portfolio with ca. 70 high-tech startups and investments in excess of CHF 13 million through the end of 2024. Multiple companies have already received a second round of investment from the fund.



kickfund.ch

Investor events and fund updates: At two events investors had the opportunity to personally meet six portfolio companies and get a close-up view of the fund's performance.

Efficient compliance structures: During the year under review, risk & compliance was successfully outsourced to specialist service provider GWP, enabling the tasks of the former chief risk officer (CRO) to be transferred in full.

LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS IN 2024

The following projects figure among the most significant initiatives promoted by the Ernst Göhner Foundation last year (apart from fostering fledgling startups and funding various grant programs):

- **Venture Kick** — program for boosting and accelerating spin-offs from institutions of higher learning
- **Phänomena 2026** — exhibition in Dietikon covering human achievements, nature and science; the exhibition enables visitors to learn with all their senses
- Construction of the **Perinatal Center** in the new pediatric hospital of Central Switzerland in Lucerne
- Establishment of the **HSG START Accelerator** program at the University of St. Gallen
- Construction of the **Flamingo Pediatric Hospital** in Fällanden
- Construction and refurbishment of the **Palme Futura residential building** in Pfäffikon (ZH) for persons with disabilities
- Construction of the **Inclusion Space** in Biel for young people and adults with disabilities



Maël, waiter in his second year of formal training, welcomes the director for lunch in the new cafe

THE CASTLE WAITER AND THE CASTLE CHEF

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

On the grounds of Seedorf Castle, hundreds of young people are undergoing training for their professional future in a protected space. They benefit from modern facilities, enabling them to improve their vocational education and training.

“The new kitchen is fantastic — really generous and state of the art. I look forward to going to work every day,” Zahra will say somewhat later, a smile on her face, as if she were in love with her place of work. She is training as a chef at the CFPS social and vocational training center, an annex of Seedorf Castle, located a 20-minute drive from Fribourg. Maël, a waiter in his second year of formal training, also has a new place of work. He proudly shows his uniform shirt with “Seedorf Café” embroidered in gold. “We finally have a cafe that’s open to the public. Now we’re a proper excursion destination.”

Neither of them have any time for chit-chatting. The cafe and kitchen have been open for three days. The staff is still getting used to things, despite this they are receiving the director for lunch today. The director of all people! And other guests to boot!

TRAINING TO BE INDEPENDENT

Maël and Zahra are 18, both of them are undergoing training at CFPS for their future. They aren’t really here voluntarily, as are a hundred other young people who live in Seedorf and are undergoing training. They would have preferred to find an apprenticeship position of their own, at a location and in a discipline of their choosing, yet because they aren’t able to cope with the challenges of today’s work world, they are undergoing training in the privately owned and operated CFPS, funded by the Swiss Federal Disability Insurance scheme. Here they can choose from among nine disciplines, while also receiving psychological counselling. They are being fostered so they will be able to live independently when they have completed their training program.

The director has sat down at the table, he is being served the first course, announced by Maël: “Pumpkin cappuccino à la Seedorf with a pumpkin seed puff pastry flute.” Now Maël waits impatiently until chef Zahra brings the soup from the kitchen to the table and gives it the final touches. Using an icing bag, she places a dab of whipped cream on the soup, making sure it is positioned in the middle. “There you go.” Maël positions the plate in front of the director, exactly one thumb’s length from the edge of the table, just like he learned to do it. He looks to the *chef de service*, his instructor, who nods approvingly.

“WHAT A DIFFERENCE ALL THAT MAKES!”

In the meantime, Zahra has disappeared back in the direction of the kitchen. Her day began early: peeling potatoes, cooking beans and browning meat. She uses the new induction range as if she has never cooked on anything else: “Wow — that makes things a breeze!” When first arriving at CFPS, Zahra worked in a kitchen with old appliances that were somewhat the worse for wear. The kitchen was also cramped and ventilation wasn’t always optimal. “What a difference all that makes!”

CFPS director Rémy Noël is also happy with the new kitchen and new cafe: “During the grand opening, one of our trainees told me that for him everything was a gigantic Christmas present.” Noël feels the same way. Thanks to the modernized and expanded facilities, CFPS has been able to achieve multiple objectives: Since the kitchen has an increased capacity, it enables not only for the trainees, staff and seminar visitors to be catered to but also walk-ins to be served as well. The training of young chefs is in keeping with the times. Now that the cafe has opened its doors to the public, trainees can also acquire the skills they need to serve at table under professional conditions.

FROM SECLUDED HOME FOR SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN TO TOURIST DESTINATION

Doing away with an old stigma at the same time has almost been more important: “We’re no longer somewhere no one wants to be.” Meaning: Seedorf Castle — once an ancestral home located in a lonely spot at the edge of a forest — was transformed into a home for developmentally challenged girls in 1902. The remote location of the castle was ideal if the intention had been to prevent the interaction of the girls with the rest of mankind. When CFPS moved in in 1974, it inherited the stigma. “For young people that continued to pose a burden for a long time.” They felt excluded, sidelined, says director Direktor Noël. The new kitchen and restaurant that is open to the public have enabled a sizable step to be made into the future. “We’re now a place people seek out for a getaway break for a view of the Alps. Our trainees live somewhere that is no longer avoided but specifically sought out.”

The Ernst Göhner Foundation routinely fosters the education and training of young people with special needs or social interaction difficulties, by refurbishing facilities or bringing special projects to life. Apart from CFPS, the Foundation also recently lent support to the Battenberg Foundation for integration and vocational training places in Biel and the Check Your Chance association in a pilot project in Ticino for preventing and alleviating the unemployment of young people.



Chef Zahra in the newly equipped kitchen



Arborist Benedikt Arnold and Raphaële Piaget at work

"EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED"

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

Free-living honey bees are threatened by extinction — that is why FreeTheBees is building artificial nest sites.

I didn't know that.

The power saw briefly stops emitting its ear-splitting noise, André Wermelinger takes advantage of the lull. "We generally think of honey as a natural product. But that isn't true. Nowadays, bee-keeping is a form of industrial farming. Bees are jammed together, "fattened up" and kept alive with medication. Which is anything other than romantic." So? Wermelinger doesn't take any time to engage in thought, he continues his attack: "And wild honeybees are dying out because ..." The power saw interrupts him.

It is a day in the fall of 2024. We are standing in a meadow high above Engelberg and gaze at a majestic sycamore maple. André Wermelinger is the general manager of FreeTheBees, an organization founded in 2013 with the objective of securing an appropriate habitat for honeybees in the countryside.

FRAUDULENT LABELING

A man in orange protective gear is working on the trunk of the sycamore maple, 20 feet above the ground. His name is Benedikt Arnold, an arborist by training. He is cutting a hollow in the trunk. On the ground underneath him is Raphaële Piaget, head of the tree hollow project at FreeTheBees and assisting Benedikt. While she hoists a rope up containing a tool Benedikt needs, she discusses what they are doing with him. The hollow is to be rectangular in shape, approximately three feet high and the width of a hand, corresponding to the spatial requirements of a bee colony.

The whine made by the power saw provides some time to think. Until recently, for me honey was a product I could simply grab off the shelf at any supermarket, without giving the matter any real thought — collected by busy little bees, gently processed by a beekeeper, and healthy to boot. The label promised nature pure. Now I have to hear myself called an incurable romantic.

And not only that: I was unaware that many native bee species are on the brink of extinction. Why? When the power saw takes another break, André disabuses me of a couple of other notions: "On account of monocultures that blossom only once a year, making it impossible for bees to store up reserves. That means they starve in winter. Our forests are constantly being harvested and old trees culled, meaning there are far fewer hollows available for bees to maintain a colony."



A tree hollow in the making

Wild honeybees starve — because they are homeless. It all makes sense when you think about it. Why didn't it ever occur to me? North of the Alps in Switzerland there are currently only three hundred bee colonies, a fraction of what there used to be.

135 ARTIFICIAL HOLLOWS

Two hours later the work on the trunk has progressed significantly. Benedikt has exchanged the power saw for a chisel. He is now gouging out the hollow from the inside. Chips fly, beads of sweat form on his brow.

Next spring we'll find out whether bees adopt the tree trunk hollow. André is hoping that a bee hive in the vicinity will swarm. "The queen sends out scout bees that search for a new nesting site for the new colony." The scouts will discover the tree hollow, or at least that's the idea. To date, FreeTheBees has created 135 artificial nesting sites and thus room for 135 additional colonies.

Good — but is it enough?

"No, of course not," says Wermelinger. In order for the situation of wild honeybees to improve in the long term, they urgently need to be protected. "But that's not happening." In contrast to Germany and Austria, our animal welfare laws don't include insects.

The situation of free-living bees and their habitat is dire. If they are unable to survive that's a sign that the entire ecosystem is sick. "We can't change the situation unless we understand how the world works. In other words, when we understand that everything is interconnected." Every plant, every animal has its role in the grand scheme of things. If one species disappears, the chain is missing a link. If many species disappear, the system collapses.

TREE HOLLOWES — ECOSYSTEMS UNTO THEMSELVES

For Wermelinger that is a pivotal realization in fashioning the tree hollows: The hollows are created so they can also be colonized by other animal species. "Of course, we are mainly interested in bees but if birds or other insects discover the hollows for themselves and nest in them, that is a desirable outcome." In a natural tree hollow there may be up to 30 other species of insects, including approximately 170 species of mites and several thousand microorganisms. Wermelinger: "Tree hollows are ecosystems that have developed over millions of years. Animals and other organisms live in them in a symbiotic relationship, they need one another. So we let nature take its course; we don't pretend to know better."

The Ernst Göhner foundation attaches high importance to species threatened with extinction. That is why it routinely supports organizations that are devoted to animal protection, e.g. Bird-Life, Pro Natura or the Association for Promoting the Welfare of Butterflies. The Ernst Göhner Foundation also doesn't shy away from taking a stand when it comes to controversial animals: it also supports organizations that make the case for lynxes, river otters or wolves in rural areas.



Rehearsal in the new rehearsal room of the Jazzhaus

JAZZ IN THE JAZZHAUS

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

The search for a suitable rehearsal space turned into an odyssey for the Zurich Jazz Orchestra. A happy-ever-after was achieved after seven years.

“Quiet, please! Rehearsal in progress.”

That actually has to be written in black letters on a red background — because nothing is to be heard of the goings-on behind the door. Zilch. Not a sound.

The other side of the door is being assaulted by 100 decibels, i.e. the acoustic force of twenty musicians who have joined together under the name of the Zurich Jazz Orchestra (ZJO). They are rehearsing in the middle of Zurich’s *Industriequartier*, in a small building, surrounded by large buildings, in them many people who would like to sleep in on a dreary Saturday morning like today.

And *can* sleep in.

“Again. Let’s take it from bar 137 to 140. The phrasing should be grittier, rawer, less polished,” says Ed Partyka to the band. The sheet music of *Ophelia*, written by Austrian trumpeter Thomas Gansch, lies open on the music stands. Ed counts the beats and then the band starts up: wistful, melancholic and dramatic, like when Shakespeare has Hamlet’s love die.

LAWSUITS ARE A THING OF THE PAST

Directed by Ed Partyka and Daniel Schenker, the Zurich Jazz Orchestra is currently practicing to make a recording. The musicians arrived well over an hour ago, and marched right through the door bearing the sign “Quiet, please! Rehearsal in progress.” And no one complained. Also not about the room being too cold, or too damp, or too hot. Or about the bad air and poor lighting, the low ceiling, the echoing and bad acoustics. There was also no mention about the lack of storage space or that everybody was sick and tired of having to lug the music stands around.

Because these complaints are no more, they’re a thing of the past. Since April of 2024 to be precise.

Ed: “That surpasses all my dreams.”

Daniel: “I’m blown away by the sound quality.”

Bettina: “I can think of only one word to describe it: sensational.”

Daniel: “Absolute serendipity.”

Bettina: All the crap stopgaps are a thing of the past.”

Ed: “We’ve finally got a home of our own.”



Getting ready for the rehearsal

For seven long years the band searched high and low for an acceptable rehearsal space, especially Bettina Uhlmann, the Zurich Jazz Orchestra's manager for the last 24 years. After the band had to give up its former home, it suffered from one makeshift solution to another. Not only was that unsatisfactory and cumbersome, the band's homelessness also had an effect on its mood. Add to this an embarrassing element, an element of shame. The Zurich Jazz Orchestra is not just some combo, but one of the key big bands in Europe, a collection vessel for talents and a highlight for its members in the Who's Who of the jazz world. Because whoever plays with the Zurich Jazz Orchestra is somebody. Meaning the band is entitled to its own rehearsal space.

NOW OR NEVER

The search for such a space finally came to an end when dogged persistence, good connections and a pinch of luck came together. One day, manager Bettina Uhlmann saw that part of the building next door to her office was for sale, near Limmatplatz and thus centrally located. She saw the potential, pulled the right strings and was finally able to convince the Dr. Stephan à Porta Foundation to purchase the part building. It was a now-or-never opportunity.

In so doing, the biggest problem was solved — and many new ones reared their ugly heads to take its place. It appeared impossible for a big band to ever be able to rehearse in this space. For over half a century, lighting elements had been made here, and the building reflected this: the rooms were small, cramped; the ceilings were low; and groundwater threatened to seep into the basement. The exact opposite of what the Zurich Jazz Orchestra needed. And how to get a handle on a 100-decibel sound level in the middle of town? Most of the time the band practices when people are home: during the evening, on weekends.

The preparatory work was equally demanding: the architect and the acoustic expert had their work cut out for them. Now the former “cottage” as Uhlmann sometimes calls it has changed beyond all recognition. It now proudly bears the name of “Jazzhaus”. The ceiling between the basement and the ground floor has been removed, the cramped rooms have been transformed into a single space — the new rehearsal room, spacious and airy. Windows let light in at the corners. Sand-gray walls and light wood combined with suspended lights make for a harmonious environment. And the acoustics have been designed so that the sound is able to develop optimally, with only a hint of an echo, while remaining in the room.

Another hour has passed, finally director Ed hears the calls being uttered by the band: “It’s time for a break, let’s take a break ...” The musicians exit to the outside through the sound-proof door and are now standing in the courtyard, bending and stretching. The Jazzhaus is overlooked by the neighboring buildings like from the balcony in an opera house, but nobody looks down. Because there’s nothing to hear. Which is actually too bad: the neighbors don’t know what they’re missing. The Zurich Jazz Orchestra — unbelievable!

The work of the Ernst Göhner Foundation in its Culture projects also includes taking an interest in the working conditions of musicians. In addition to organizing performance venues, we also help to create rehearsal spaces that are suitable and affordable — for music genres of every stripe and catering to a wide range of requirements. One example of this is the tonRaum project in Basel, which organizes affordable living quarters and rehearsal facilities for highly talented musicians.



Alexander Ernst, Adam Opuchlik and Robin Grünbichler in their office in Löwenberg

INCUBATOR ABOVE THE FOG

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

In Löwenberg — once an orphanage and military barracks located above Schluein — startups are designing the future of the world.

“Bottoms up? Or does one sip suffice?” Adam and Robin gaze questioningly at the cups in their hands and then at Alexander. A combination of various mineral substances are dissolving in the cups, weighed by Alexander to one tenth of a gram. He wants to find out whether the taste is right.

“Bottoms up,” says Alexander.

They chuckle. The mixture goes down the hatch.

CH Nutrition GmbH is the name of the startup founded by Alexander Ernst and his business partners Adam Opuchlik and Robin Grünbichler. Alexander — with a chemistry and biology degree from ETH Zurich and Harvard — is the creative head of the company; his partners are in charge of digital services and finance. The trio’s goal: stir up the fast-growing market for food supplements. They believe what they have to offer is far superior to the products of competitors. Why? Because CH Nutrition GmbH only selects ingredients that foster useful gut bacteria, for example. “We get the full metabolic activity from the bacteria,” says Alexander.

DRONES THAT PRODUCE ELECTRIC POWER

The company already has a product line: boxes with shimmering matte black bottles are stacked against the wall. Now the object is to develop other products and make CH Nutrition GmbH known to the world. But that isn’t so easy. That is why Alexander, Adam and Robin are huddled together here on a rainy day in September of 2024, in a strange building that doesn’t quite create the impression that business history could be made here.

But perhaps it can. In spaces spread over 30,000 sq. ft. located on three floors above, below and next to them, others are engaged in tinkering, thinking and testing. They are developing drones for generating electricity. Or investigating winter socks made of recycled thermoplastics. Or working on novel ski bindings that are designed to make injuries virtually impossible.

“Löwenberg” is the name of this strange building located above Schluein in the Surselva region. Constructed in the mid 19th century to replace a burned-out castle, the building first served Dominican nuns as a home, and then was transformed into a missionary school and military barracks, an orphanage, a vacation camp, transit center for refugees, only then to stand vacant. The owner, the St. Josef parish church foundation of the diocese of Chur, didn’t know what to do with the outsize space.

ECOSYSTEM FOR STARTUPS

That is, until a couple dozen entrepreneurs came from the lowlands. All of them had a second home in the region and knew the area. They felt these old walls shouldn't be allowed to fall into ruin. Why not repurpose them?

And so, in 2020 they founded the Löwenberg Surselva Impact Lab (SIL) charitable association, assumed the building under a building lease, and began to design its future. Their goal: to transform Löwenberg into an ecosystem for startups, as SIL CEO Willy Bischofberger explains. To seek solutions for issues faced by people in mountain regions. To tackle the global challenges we are facing like difficulties with our energy supply or foodstuffs production that is steadily coming under increasing pressure to feed a growing population.

Others are also already thinking about these sorts of things in Minergie-certified aluminum-glass palaces with a few trees on the roof and an artificial pond before the entrance. But not in an environment that can hardly be surpassed as fertile ground for inspiration: In Schluein, hiking trails begin as soon as you step outside the door, the sweet air smells of hay and sunshine, it is only a hop, skip and a jump to the next skiing area, and fog is unknown here. At the same time, Löwenberg is easy to reach from all directions: It is located at the intersection of the Zurich, Milan and Munich airports. Only the last few hundred yards have not bent to modernization: The road leading up to the building still dates back to the days of horse-drawn mail coaches; parking spaces are also missing before Löwenberg.

The gently renovated building with its state-of-the-art tech facilities is in full operation. Seventy startups have found a home here, in addition to a couple of local small businesses like a ballet studio. Some of the largest rooms are reserved as coworking spaces. Teams from near and far meet here to work on their projects in a concentrated manner. "They come for a 'sprint'," as Willy Bischofberger puts it. Studio apartments with a view of Mount Piz Fess with its split summit make it possible to spend the night on the premises. Artists have moved into the top floor. Their role is to be the "driving forces" in the building. Art inspires business ventures.

A WI-FI EXTENDER INSTEAD OF A CRUCIFIX

There is still a lot to discover, improve and also to save on our planet, that is why the Löwenberg Surselva Impact Lab is not satisfied with "business as usual" in Löwenberg. The day on which Alexander Ernst and his partners are working on their new product, a startup event is also scheduled.

It's four o'clock. The Löwenberg chapel begins to fill up. At the former place of contemplation of the Dominican nuns, office chairs have replaced the church pews and a wi-fi extender hangs on the wall at the place where the crucifix used to hang. Fifty investors have made the trip here to hear the pitches of the startups that need assistance in order to realize their business ideas. If a pitch



Conference in the office

is convincing, the startup can hope to not only receive financial support but also benefit from the professional experience and strategy provided by the investors. “Early bird meets silver beard” is Sil CEO Bischofberger’s way of summarizing what the get-together is all about. And that’s not all: “The B2B reach to 470 million contacts throughout the world is unmatched.” The interest exhibited is equally high.

During the next few hours the representatives of one startup after another will venture before the investors: they have ten minutes to pitch their ideas. Those pitching include a spin-off of ETH Zurich that has developed a “radically new pupil-controlled neurofeedback method”. In the future it will be possible to modulate the arousal level in our brains ourselves and this will enable “peak performance”. Another startup seeks to market the “taste of the Swiss Alps in a glass” — non-alcoholic beverages for adults. Sipping the product made by the company is like taking a “deep breath of fresh air on a sunny day in the Alps”, explains the presenter. A third startup is exploring the effect of medication. Research is based on how genes and the proteins produced by them are arranged in the cell nucleus, and how that impacts the effect of a drug in the body. The startup claims to be able to predict this via AI — a technique that promises to “redefine” how drugs are developed over the next decade.

The pitches of the startups extend well into the evening. The light is still on in Alexander’s office, located one floor above the chapel. Clothed in his trekking shoes and fleece jacket, he is still at the computer face, a sticky note with “JUST DO IT!” glued to the back of his screen. Once upon a time, Alexander was division head of Ems-Chemie AG, responsible for generating revenue in the 9-figure range, a business class denizen. Until he’d had enough. “Here in Löwenberg, everything that’s not important is excluded,” he says. “There’s no dress code or a CEO breathing down my neck.” He attends yoga sessions in the building, and when his body is in need of oxygen, he goes cycling or skiing for a couple of hours. Alexander: “There’s no better place to focus my thoughts and actions on what is essential, what’s truly important.”

The areas of funding and support covered by the Ernst Göhner Foundation include startups, in addition to projects in mountain regions of special significance. The fact that the Löwenberg Surselva Impact Lab successfully combines both — the incubator for startups is located between Ilanz and Flims — makes Löwenberg a trailblazer project. It is the only one of its kind that is comparable to the Uri Innovation Biotope non-profit initiative, specifically geared to foster the establishment of innovative companies. The Uri Innovation Biotope is also supported by the Ernst Göhner Foundation.

THE GÖHNER FAMILY

The Göhner Company was originally founded in 1890 by Gottlieb Göhner, Ernst Göhner's father. After his father's death, Ernst Göhner took over the glazier's shop at Hallenstrasse 15/17 in Zurich in 1920 and expanded the family-run business to become a significant corporate group, with various members of the family also working there.

In 1957 Ernst Göhner established the family foundation Aabach Oberrisch, named after his estate Aabach, located in Risch on Lake Zug, where he had lived since 1950. In 1960 the Foundation, to which founder Ernst Göhner contributed a significant parcel of stock of Ernst Göhner AG, was entered in the commercial register under the new name of "Aaborn Foundation", and thus was put under the oversight of the Canton of Zug. In 1969, the Foundation was renamed "Ernst Göhner Foundation". The words used by Ernst Göhner to describe his vision of the foundation created by him occur in the film *Ein Beispiel* ("An Example", the Life and Achievements of Ernst Göhner) produced on the occasion of his 70th birthday:

"... All of us build the future. Building something is constructive in the broadest sense of the word. And since we seek to preserve the continuity of our work and our places of work, that is why I am establishing my own foundation."



Invoice issued by Gottlieb Göhner, 1890s

Shortly before his death at the end of 1971, Ernst Göhner sold core parts of his group of companies to Elektrowatt AG. The Foundation's charter was amended at the same time. In it founder Göhner explicitly established the entrepreneurial character of his foundation. To this day, the corporate stakes and the real estate portfolio are the key sources of funding for the grants made by the Foundation.

In the Foundation's charter, Ernst Göhner also provided for gifts to over 400 employees of outstanding merit of the companies of the Göhner Group for whom the Göhner-Meritas Foundation, an employer-funded trust, was established in 1972 to supplement their occupational retirement and disability benefits. The beneficiaries and the retired

employees of Göhner Merkur AG routinely get together at the invitation of the Ernst Göhner Foundation for a day's outing. In 2023, forty people took part in the Lake Constance cruise on the *MS Sântis*.

Grants to the family members are made under the legal framework provided for Swiss family foundations. They are largely based on a lifecycle model catering to defined needs and situations. Support of education and occupational/professional training takes front and center stage, as do financing of owner-occupied residential property and providing financial aid in difficult times in the beneficiaries' lives.

Most of the family beneficiaries live in Switzerland, the others reside in the U.S. The oldest family members are nephews and the youngest are already great great grand nieces and nephews of founder Ernst Göhner. The 30th family beneficiary was born in November of 2024. In 2024, the annual get-together of the family beneficiaries took place in Geneva. This time family beneficiaries from the U.S. made the trip over to be there. Two of the projects supported by the Ernst Göhner Foundation were visited: the CERN Science Gateway and the museum of the International Committee of the Red Cross. As in the previous year, the Christmas event took place in Haus zum Rüden, the heritage guildhall of the Constaffel Society, in Zurich.

The Foundation's headquarters are housed in the Stadlin Villa in Zug, a listed heritage property constructed in 1895. During the traditional August 1st Open House Day organized by the City of Zug, the public has the opportunity to tour the villa and its gardens.



Villa Stadlin, headquarters of the Ernst Göhner Foundation, Zug

ERNST GÖHNER (1900–1971)

1890	<p>Founding of the artisan glazier's shop in Zurich by Gottlieb Göhner (1863–1920), the father of Ernst Göhner.</p> <p>1906: Purchase of the residential building at Hallenstrasse 15/17 with attached glazier's shop in Zurich.</p>
1900	Ernst Göhner born as the second youngest of six children on February 28, 1900.
1920	<p>After his father's death, Göhner takes over the shop with a workforce of six. 1935: The sole proprietorship is later transformed into Ernst Göhner AG.</p>
1925/32	<p>Acquisition of TUFA AG (Türen- und Fensterfabrik AG), today: EgoKiefer AG (member of the Arbonia-Forster Group since 2004).</p> <p>Sale of window business to the Danish DOVISTA Group in 2021.</p>



Ernst Göhner at the Göhner Anniversary Celebration 1890–1960 on October 28, 1960, in the Zurich Convention Center

1934	Founding of Holzkarosserien AG (abbreviated: Holka AG). Sale to Th. Willy AG in 1966.
1940	Assumption of general agency for DKW (Auto Union GmbH) in Switzerland and, from 1954, in South Africa by way of United Car and Diesel Distributors, which subsequently also assumed agency for Daimler-Benz. After World War II: aid in rebuilding Auto Union GmbH in Germany. From 1951: Significant stake in Auto Union GmbH, sold to Daimler-Benz AG (Stuttgart, Germany) in 1958.
1944	Founding of Bauwerk AG, today: Bauwerk Group AG (parquet flooring).
1950	Founding of Reederei Zürich AG with the Federation of Migros Cooperatives. Sale of stake (50%) some years later to Migros.
1962	Acquisition of interest in Alpina-Reederei AG (maritime shipping) in concert with Oerlikon-Bührle & Co. (25% stake each). Stakes later increased to 49% each. 1988: Sale to German Harmstorf Shipping Group.
Beginning of the 1960s	Acquisition of German companies Bartels-Werke GmbH (wood working) and Ibus-Werke GmbH (manufacture of wood panels).
1969	Acquisition of 40% stake in Panalpina World Transport (Holding) Ltd., acquired by DSV A/S in 2019.
1971	Sale of Ernst Göhner AG, Ego Werke AG, Bauwerk AG, Bartels-Werke GmbH and Ibus-Werke GmbH to Elektrowatt AG. Death of Ernst Göhner on November 24, 1971.

GEMS FROM OUR ARCHIVES

by Urs Lengwiler (MAS ALIS archivist and CEO of fokus AG)

Of the mundane and the unusual: a company outing in 1938

These days, people unthinkingly snap pictures with their cellphone, giving little thought to what might happen to these pictures in the future. After all, they don't cost anything. The situation was different back when photographs were taken using film cameras. Taking pictures involved a cost, and taking them was reserved for special occasions. Only important events worth commemorating used to be preserved on film. And so we find lovingly created albums in many archives that show what was considered a special occasion.

There is one small album in the archives of the Ernst Göhner Foundation depicting a company outing of the Altstätten window factory in 1938. The album also contains a neatly typed travel report. It tells of the anticipation, the hopes for good weather, the parade of workers making their way to the train station (accompanied by a company band), the good food, concluded by returning to Altstätten, with the admonition of the plant manager "for all of us to devote our replenished bodies to our daily work in the factory." A colorful tale, illustrated by black-and-white pictures. The outing was made to the vicinity of Sargans, ca. 25 miles from Altstätten as the crow flies. Today a mere stone's throw, for the workers of the window factory back then a special event that merited commemorating.



Company outing of
TUFA AG (Türen- und
Fensterfabrik AG),
in September of 1938

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