

# HUMER FOUNDATION

## FOR ACADEMIC TALENT



### THANK YOU!

Dr Franz B. Humer, Chairman of the Foundation Board

We have been supporting especially talented young scholars for the past 17 years. Throughout all these years, I have received many thank you letters from doctoral candidates, which has always brought me great joy. Now, in the final year of our Foundation's work, it is time to reverse the roles and for us to say a big thank you! Thank you for a productive time spent enjoying many fascinating encounters, listening to interesting and well-founded insights into various academic disciplines and reading sophisticated and compelling theses.

Allow me to explain something – right from the point at which our Foundation was set up, it was clear to Renate Gerber and I that we would be reliant on a close working relationship with the Universities of Basel, Salzburg and, in the first few years, Zurich – including as early as the selection stage for the doctoral candidates. Only the qualified teaching staff in the research areas of Africa (Basel), Europe (Salzburg) and Asia (Zurich) had the expertise required to produce a fair and proper evaluation of the various topics and hypotheses of a doctoral thesis. Today I can say that this close cooperation, over many years in the case of some lecturers, has proved its worth. As members of the Foundation Board, we have been able to get to know many of these professors, as well as the relevant members of the rectorates, on a personal level. We have always enjoyed successful administrative cooperation with the three universities. To all the coordinators in Basel, Salzburg and Zurich, I would like to say thank you.

I would also like to thank the members of our Foundation

Board. With Renate Gerber as Vice Chairwoman, Gottlieb Keller, Urs Lauffer and myself, the Board has remained unchanged since the beginning, which is a testament to our commitment to our goal of providing talented young scholars with targeted support. The meetings of the Board were characterised by swift processing of statutory business and even more intensive discussions about individual thesis projects. In carrying out comprehensive preparation and follow-up work for our meetings, Urs Lauffer as executive member of the Foundation Board has ensured that we have been able to have a firm grasp of our duties at all times.

Without the professional work of our office, headed up by Stéphanie Ramel and Fritz Frischknecht, we would not have been able to achieve as much as we have since the Foundation was established. Ms Ramel has maintained contact with the universities in impressive fashion and has contributed a great deal to our success. Fritz Frischknecht was our financial expert; not only did he prepare our annual financial statements, but worked closely with our banks too. I would like to thank both of them for their invaluable work.

But, on behalf of the Foundation Board, my biggest thank you goes to "our" doctoral candidates. I will look back on our personal encounters and conversations with great fondness. Such meetings enabled us to gain insights into certain problems and possible solutions that we otherwise would not have considered. With your theses, you have all created something valuable and enduring!

The realisation remains that, even after the Bologna Process reforms, theses are still considered to be of particular importance.



## PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023

Urs Lauffer, executive member of the Foundation Board

Set up in 2007, our Foundation has supported doctoral candidates at universities in Switzerland and Austria on an exclusively non-profit basis. To this day, this has been done in close cooperation with the universities of Salzburg, Basel and, for a time, Zurich. As stated in previous performance reports, our Foundation will be ceasing its activities at the end of 2024 and will be liquidated during the course of 2025. Until then, it will be using the full amount of its capital to support more than 70 doctoral candidates. The Foundation has awarded funding totalling around CHF 9.5 million during the 18 years of its work. In doing so, the goals set by the Foundation in 2007 have been achieved and, indeed, surpassed. Not only have we been able to provide targeted support to numerous especially talented young scholars when working on their thesis, which typically lasts for three years, but we have also seen theses produced to a high standard, receiving attention and recognition in the academic world as a result.

What is particularly pleasing from the Foundation Board's point of view is that the doctoral candidates we support have been able to launch impressive careers in economics, science and politics after completing their university work. The office staff and the Foundation Board have regularly filled each other in on these career stories. In summer 2024, in the company of the Governor of Salzburg and various representatives of the Universities of Basel and Salzburg, our Foundation will host a closing event in the city at which former doctoral candidates will speak about their career paths since completing their studies.

We have deeply valued the intensive collaboration with the relevant staff at these universities throughout all the years of our Foundation's existence. The professors involved have regularly monitored the quality of the individual theses, which ensures high standards at all times. Even when selecting the individual doctoral candidates, it was always the respective university that was responsible for this, not our Foundation.

Regarding the year under review, in 2023, the University of Salzburg received a sum of EUR 250 000. This support enabled five candidates to continue their doctoral work at the Centre of European Studies. Our Foundation has also once again supported the University of Basel with a grant of CHF 100 000 for the key research topic "Africa". This sum was used to fund two doctoral candidates.

During the year under review, the Foundation Board met in two sessions, in Arlesheim and Salzburg. The main focus was the evaluation and approval of requests for financial support for doctoral candidates, which was undertaken on the basis of thorough, balanced assessments made by the two universities. In addition, the Foundation's statutory business (annual accounts, yearly review, auditor's report, elections) was dealt with. Furthermore, the Foundation Board reviewed the success of our funding activities. Finally, we also dealt with the financial issues, including our investment principles.

At the end of 2023, the organisation's capital totalled around CHF 466 000. With the organisation's capital at this level, it will be possible for the Foundation to completely fulfil its obligations by the end of 2024. The office was managed by Lauffer & Frischknecht, a communication management consultancy, on a consultative basis until the end of 2023. For the 2024/25 period, Stéphanie Ramel will assume the management role directly. Fritz Frischknecht, MA Econ., will remain responsible for financial matters, including the accounts. Swiss GAP FER 21 is used for the annual financial statements.

As executive member of the Foundation Board, I would like to say thank you for all the support I have received in this post over the years.

## CURRENT THESES

At present the Humer Foundation is supporting the following doctoral students:

### UNIVERSITY OF BASEL AFRICA

CLAUDINE RAKOMANANA

Transnational union between Malagasy women and non-Malagasy men: compelling attraction on sex, affect, money and power

KAUE FELIPE NOGAROTTO CRIMA BELLINI

Queer Migration in Europe: Racialized experiences and embodied spaces

### UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES

SARAH DEISL

Effect of the Member States' Rule of Law crisis on the division of competences among EU organs

LÉO GOTARDA

The Mainstreaming of Climate Change into all EU Policies

KLAUDIA KOXHA

Populism and European Integration in Western Balkans

BIRGIT CAROLIN MITTER

Veins of European Cultural Policy: Awarding, Effects and Sustainability of European Cultural Project Funding

NICO PETZ

Modelling Non-linear Macroeconomic Dynamics Using Gaussian Processes

## ALUMNI/ALUMNAE

### UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH

Motaz Alnaouq, Patrick Brozzo, Amir Hamid, Pia Hollenbach, Eliza Isabaeva, Thiruni Kelegama, Aliya Khawari, Ayaka Löschke, Linda Maduz, Nathalie Marseglia, Nina Rabeth, Matthäus Rest, Dilyara Suleymanova, Tobias Weiss, Miriam Wenner

### UNIVERSITY OF BASEL

Christopher Barratt, Melanie Boehi, Raja Daouah, Esther Tolulope Fadeyi, Barbara Heer, Stephen Asol Kapinde, Andrea Kifyasi, Joschka Philipps, Julia Rensing, Richard Faustine Sambaiga, Vladimir Wingate

### UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG

Claudia Arisi, Laura Andreea Baroni, Moritz Buschmann, Francesco Galletti, Sandra Hummelbrunner, Hendrik Jungmann, Milena Kern, Christian Kleinertz, Iryna Kristensen-Turlay, Cal le Gall, Thomas Lehner, Dominika Majorowski, Simone Motyka-Fida, Christina Ortner, Alena Ottichová, Jörg Paetzold, Ilze Ruse, Helene Schönheinz, Lucia Schulten, Alexander Seymer, Isabel Staudinger, Anna Stelzer, Erwin Stolz, Markus Tiefenbacher, James Huldrick Wilhelm

## KEY FINANCIAL DATA 31 December 2023

in CHF

	2023	2022	2021
Financial support	345 000	439 000	377 000
Annual result	-370 000	-478 000	-340 000

Since it was established in 2007, the Foundation has provided financial support totalling around CHF 9.1 million.

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## FOUNDATION BOARD

### CHAIRMAN

Dr Franz B. Humer (Erlenbach)

Businessman

### VICE CHAIRWOMAN

Renate Gerber (Arlesheim)

Honorary Senator of the University of Salzburg,  
honorary member of the Board of Directors of the  
Fritz Gerber Foundation for talented young people

### MEMBERS

Dr Gottlieb Keller (Zug)

Former member of the Corporate Executive  
Committee of F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd

Urs Lauffer (Steinmaur)

Partner in Lauffer & Frischknecht,  
Management Consultants for Communication

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## OFFICE

HUMER-FOUNDATION  
FOR ACADEMIC TALENT

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## STATUTORY AUDITORS

Fidinter AG (Zurich)