PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of the ETH Board on 14 July 2021

19 new professors appointed at ETH Zurich and EPFL

At its meeting of 14 July 2021 and upon application of the President of ETH Zurich, Professor Joël Mesot, and the President of EPFL, Professor Martin Vetterli, the ETH Board appointed a total of seven women and twelve men as professors and awarded the title of professor to one individual. It also took note of the resignations of five professors and thanked them for their services.

In the last 12 months, the ETH Board has made a total of 13 new appointments for women and 32 for men; the proportion of women among these new appointments amounts to 29%.

Bern/Zurich, 15 July 2021

New appointment at ETH Zurich and EPFL

Professor Beate Jessel (*1962), currently President of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Bonn, Germany, as Full Professor of Landscape Development in the Department of Environmental Systems Science at ETH Zurich and in the School of Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering at EPFL. Beate Jessel will take up her post as Director of the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL) at the start of September 2021. A joint professorship at ETH Zurich and EPFL is attached to this role. Beate Jessel's research interests encompass concepts and strategies for nature conservation, landscape development and land use management, environmentally oriented planning, river basin management and landscape aesthetics.

New appointments at ETH Zurich

Dr Máté József Bezdek (*1991), currently Postdoctoral Researcher at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Functional Coordination Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry and Applied Biosciences. Máté József Bezdek's research covers function-oriented design and the synthesis of coordination compounds with unusual electronic, magnetic and thermochemical properties. At ETH Zurich this award-winning researcher will devote himself to developing methods of using coordination chemistry to help solve problems of particular relevance to society in areas such as sustainable synthesis methods, energy management and sensor materials.

Dr Lana Josipović (*1991), currently Research Assistant at EPFL, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Digital Systems and Design Automation in the Department of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering. Lana Josipović's research has a focus on high-level synthesis techniques for the automatic generation of hardware architectures based on abstract high-level programming, with a special emphasis on flexibility and parallelisation. This internationally acclaimed researcher is the ideal choice to strengthen the area of digital circuit technology and computer architecture in the Department of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering. Her appointment will also lead to important interactions and synergies with the Department of Computer Science.
Professor Arno Brandlhuber (*1964), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Architecture and Design in the Department of Architecture. Arno Brandlhuber is an internationally established practising architect with outstanding technical and conceptual skills, a theoretician of architecture and urban design, and a gifted teacher of design. Over the past four years, his media-based approach of experimenting with films and documentaries has enhanced teaching in the Department of Architecture in novel, valuable and important ways. His achievements also include a whole series of significant architectonic projects and exhibitions, including the German Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2021.

Professor Jan De Vylder (*1968), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Architecture and Design in the Department of Architecture. Jan De Vylder's work focuses on reusing materials and components of existing buildings and transforming complex built environments – an area that is set to grow in importance. He is a frequent participant in the international debate in this field, as can be seen from the many invitations he receives to exhibitions and lectures, as well as the awards with which he has been honoured. Thanks to his experience with completed buildings, Jan De Vylder will be in a position to make a significant contribution to "Architecture and Care", a new strategic area of the Department of Architecture.

Professor An Fonteyne (*1971), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Affective Architectures in the Department of Architecture. An Fonteyne is an established practitioner in Belgium and a member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts, among other bodies. Her work encompasses the adaptive reutilisation of existing buildings. She advocates a building culture that pays particular attention to the economic and social boundary conditions of construction, as a counterweight to the trend towards self-oriented and object-related architecture. In addition to her architecture practice, An Fonteyne is a very successful teacher. At ETH Zurich she has, for example, developed a unique form of instruction which closely integrates design with teaching.

Professor Momoyo Kaijima (*1969), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Architectural Behaviorology in the Department of Architecture. Momoyo Kaijima's activities range from architectonic building design and the investigation of urban design phenomena to the production of works of art that bring her distinctive quality into the public arena. Her work has a particular focus on behaviorology: investigating the behaviour of people, objects or buildings in their contemporary social and physical setting. This renowned researcher has won multiple prizes and achieved wide recognition for her fieldwork-based studies and publications.

Professor Elli Mosayebi (*1977), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Architecture and Design in the Department of Architecture. Elli Mosayebi's research concerns kinetic spaces and the question of how residential construction can be better combined with other types of programmes and uses. She identifies new forms of housing in changed living environments, devises innovative design strategies and develops kinetic prototypes. In addition, she carries out basic research into the development of past and present forms of housing, with the aim of designing historically appropriate model dwellings in selected cities. Elli Mosayebi is particularly noted for forging a close connection between practice, research and teaching.
Professor Michael Nash (*1982), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at ETH Zurich and the University of Basel, as Associate Professor of Engineering of Synthetic Systems in the Department of Biosystems.

His research focuses on the characterisation and optimisation of the biophysical properties of proteins by using rational design and evolutionary in vitro approaches. Over the past five years he has made a major contribution to teaching at both the University of Basel and ETH Zurich, where he is a popular lecturer. His academic excellence has been demonstrated by numerous awards and publications, including the patents he has initiated. Michael Nash will continue to hold a dual professorship with the University of Basel (Leading House).

Professor Alexandre Theriot (*1972), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Architecture and Design in the Department of Architecture.

Alexandre Theriot's work covers the contemporary use of inexpensive materials and points to a significant shift in architectural methods in light of major economic changes. This approach is also reflected in the successful new teaching methods that Alexandre Theriot has tried out since taking up his post at ETH Zurich, with the aim of developing an architecture that makes minimal use of structures, materials and energy. His international reputation is evidenced by numerous exhibitions as well as major awards and prizes.

New appointments at EPFL

Dr Ileana-Cristina Benea-Chelmus (*1988), currently Postdoctoral Researcher at Harvard University, USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Electrical and Micro Engineering in the School of Engineering. Ileana-Cristina Benea-Chelmus conducts research into photonics with an emphasis on the development of transducers for terahertz and sub-terahertz frequencies. Her work has applications in areas that include metrology, THz frequency control and THz signal generation. Ileana-Cristina Benea-Chelmus is well known for her innovative ideas in the wider field of nanotechnology. Her research, both fundamental and applied, presents a remarkable opportunity for EPFL and will have significant implications for new optical technologies.

Professor Alessandro Chiesa (*1987), currently Assistant Professor at the University of California, USA, as Associate Professor of Computer Science and Communication Systems in the School of Computer and Communication Sciences. Alessandro Chiesa's work focuses on cryptography, security and complexity theory. His research is already being applied: among other things, he is a co-founder of the company that launched the cryptocurrency Zcash. Through his appointment, EPFL is gaining a leading researcher who is active in technology transfer. Alessandro Chiesa's activities will include working for the Center for Digital Trust and building links with industry in order to facilitate the technology transfer of advanced data protection tools.

Dr Lénaïc Chizat (*1990), currently Research Associate at Paris-Saclay University, France, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Mathematics in the School of Basic Sciences. Lénaïc Chizat's research covers the analysis, development and optimisation of algorithms, particularly those applied to machine learning. This highly competitive area presents one of the major challenges for applied mathematics over the coming years. Lénaïc Chizat and his research programme are at the cutting edge of this field of study. Thanks to his appointment, EPFL will also be able to offer new courses and strengthen connections and interchange between different areas of mathematics.
Dr Kyojin Choo (*1984), currently Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Michigan, USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Electrical and Micro Engineering in the School of Engineering. Kyojin Choo works in the field of micro- and nanoelectronics with a focus on the development of low-power integrated systems. He is an exceptionally creative and dynamic researcher with experience in industry, and his outstanding scientific and technical contributions will assist him in developing an innovative programme of teaching and research. His vision and commitment to building new academic and industrial partnerships are a major asset to EPFL.

Dr Victor Gorbenko (*1989), currently Research Fellow at Stanford University, USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Physics in the School of Basic Sciences. Victor Gorbenko's main domain of activity is Quantum Field Theory, with important implications to particle physics, cosmology and condensed matter Physics. His research has already contributed to important scientific findings, particularly in the area of Lagrangians in quantum chromodynamics. This young, very talented physicist shows exceptional potential and has the necessary abilities to succeed at EPFL. Both his expertise and his research project are making a key contribution to condensed matter physics and statistical physics.

Dr Georgios Moschidis (*1991), currently Research Fellow at the University of California, USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Mathematics in the School of Basic Sciences. Georgios Moschidis' work relates to the general theory of relativity and his research has already achieved important scientific results in areas such as Friedmann equations and anti-de Sitter space. This brilliant mathematician, who excels in the area of analysis and the general theory of relativity, has achieved an international reputation at an early age. His presence will enhance EPFL's efforts in this field and is also likely to attract students from a variety of disciplines.

Dr Philippe Schwaller (*1990), currently Postdoctoral Researcher at IBM Research Europe, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Chemistry in the School of Basic Sciences. Philippe Schwaller investigates how chemical processes can be simulated using artificial intelligence (AI). His research has a particular focus on the challenge of using artificial chemical intelligence to facilitate the discovery of new catalysts and organic materials. This talented researcher has invented important ways of applying AI methods. He belongs to a new generation of scientists with a very wide-ranging set of skills – in his case a combination of experimental research, computer science, materials science and chemistry.

Promotions at EPFL

Professor Maria Colombo (*1989), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at EPFL, as Full Professor of Mathematics in the School of Basic Sciences. Maria Colombo's research investigates mathematical analysis in combination with probability theory, computational mathematics, statistics and machine learning. In addition to her central role in research, her outstanding leadership and the various grants she has obtained, Maria Colombo also makes a valuable contribution to different areas of EPFL. She is therefore regarded as a pillar of the Mathematics Institute and School. By making this appointment, EPFL is retaining a visionary, world-class researcher whom other universities would be glad to recruit.
Professor Elison Matioli (*1979), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at EPFL, as Associate Professor of Electrical and Micro Engineering in the School of Engineering. Elison Matioli’s research concerns wide-band-gap semiconductor technology. Using an innovative approach based on a combination of materials science, physics and electrical engineering, Elison Matioli has built up an internationally acclaimed research group in the field of electronic devices. He has owned five patents since 2016, plus another six from the period before he joined EPFL, and has also received numerous awards, such as the University Latsis Prize in 2020 and an ERC Starting Grant in 2015.

Award of the title of Professor Dr Nicolas Macris (*1963), currently Senior Scientist in the School of Computer and Communication Sciences at EPFL, as Adjunct Professor at EPFL. The main focus of Nicolas Macris’ research is on applying methods from statistical physics to communication theory and theoretical computer science. He also works on quantum information theory. Nicolas Macris is one of the leading researchers in these fast-growing fields, which also fit in with the School’s strategic orientation.

Departure from ETH Zurich
Professor Ruedi Aebersold (*1954), currently Full Professor of System Biology in the Department of Biology, will retire at the end of August 2021. Ruedi Aebersold joined ETH Zurich as a full professor in 2004. As a proteins researcher, he is considered a pioneer in the field of proteomics, in which the totality of all proteins in a living organism is analysed. In this area, he has developed a series of analytical methods and computer models. Ruedi Aebersold is a highly regarded researcher internationally and has received a number of awards. He has been active on numerous scientific advisory bodies in both the public and the private sector, and has founded several companies.

Professor Oded Zilberberg (*1979), currently Assistant Professor of Quantum Condensed Matter Theory in the Department of Physics, will leave ETH Zurich at the end of August 2021. Oded Zilberberg’s research has a focus on coherent quantum phenomena at the interface of solid state physics and quantum optics. At ETH Zurich his contribution has included significantly strengthening the research activities of the National Centre of Competence in Research on Quantum Science and Technology (QSIT). He is leaving to take up an appointment at another university.

Departures from EPFL
Professor Jean-Philippe Ansermet (*1957), currently Full Professor of Experimental Physics in the School of Basic Sciences, is to retire at the end of July 2022. After stints abroad and in industry, Jean-Philippe Ansermet joined EPFL as an associate professor in 1992 and was appointed to a full professorship in 1995. The main focus of his research is nanoelectronics, with particular reference to spintronics. At EPFL, he set up a laboratory for nanostructured materials which has produced over 250 publications. This popular lecturer’s clear and extremely well-structured courses have made a mark on several generations of students.
Professor Hubert Girault (*1957), currently Full Professor of Electrochemical Kinetics in the School of Basic Sciences, will retire at the end of February 2022. Hubert Girault joined EPFL as an associate professor in 1992. His research focuses on analytical electrochemistry and biosensors. He has also served on a number of bodies, both within the Federal Institute of Technology and at international level. Hubert Girault has not only been awarded numerous prizes but is also the author of a wide range of publications. His international prominence has boosted the reputation of EPFL and the Institute of Chemical Sciences and Engineering.

Professor Alfred Wüest (*1956), currently Full Professor of Physics of Aquatic Systems in the School of Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Adjunct Professor at ETH Zurich and Group Leader at Eawag, is to retire at the end of August 2021. Alfred Wüest joined EPFL as a full professor in 2012 and became Director of the Limnology Centre at EPFL in 2013. From 2006 to 2012 he was Head of the Department of Surface Waters at Eawag, and from 2015 to March 2021 he was a member of the Directorate. His research has made a significant contribution to limnological research worldwide and he is now regarded as one of the leading figures in the field. This visionary researcher and author of numerous publications is popular with students and has served as a member of various organisations. As such he has made a major contribution to the international reputation of EPFL, Eawag and ETH Zurich.

The ETH Board would like to thank the departing professors for their services to science, teaching and academic administration.

Enquiries
Gian-Andri Casutt, Head of Communications
T +41 58 856 86 06
gian.casutt@ethrat.ch
ETH Board, Häldeliweg 15, CH-8092 Zurich,
www.ethboard.ch