

ERFA Annual meeting, 02.10.2024

Minutes

1. Round of Introduction of all participants

Roman Furrer (Empa)

Jakob Heier (Empa)

Daniela Oehy (ETH Rat)

Kristin Becker (EPLF, school assemblies)

Christopher Sauder (ETHZ)

Martin Schmid (EAWAG)

Olivia Stuber (Transfair)

Aidan Uebelman (Transfair)

Karin Beck (Eawag)

Andrea Manconi (WSL)

Gabriela Borin Barin (Empa)

Klaus Ethgen (WSL)

Wilfried Pfingsten (PSI)

Melanie Glayre (PVB)

Luc Python (PVB)

Sabine Hoffmann (ETHZ)

Samuel Brunner (PVB)

2. Publica Succession

- **9 Representatives:** The selection of representatives for Publica succession includes 9 representatives from the employees: 3 from ETH, 3 from EPFL, and 3 from RIs.
- **Nominations:** The following people were nominated as representatives of the 4RIs
 - Brigitt Fritschi (Empa)
 - Thorsten Rausch (PSI)
 - Marion Sommer (WSL)

3. PEKO Evaluation

- **Self-Evaluation:** ETH provided a summary of the self-evaluation of their PEKO, assessing their work and creating a roadmap for future tasks of the staff commission at ETH. A few points were discussed including: strategic plans for 2025-2028 were formulated, the challenge to acquire new members,

and budget. The issue of postdocs and senior scientists not being represented by PEKO was highlighted, as they are key contributors despite their temporary status. Engaging professors is also challenging, as it is across all levels.

4. Reorganization of ETH Domain

- **Overview by Roman:** Roman provided an update on the status at Empa, mentioning that documents were received and discussions were held with the Empa CEO. A letter outlining our concerns with questions is being formulated.
 - **Institutes Feedback:**
 - **Empa:** Presented questions and concerns; slides will be available on the shared drive.
 - **PSI:** Echoed the concerns of Empa, especially regarding HR and IT accessibility if the institutes merge and the problem of outsourcing technical staff.
 - **WSL:** Had limited staff participation but aligned with Empa and PSI on concerns about contracts, IT, and strategy. A complaint was raised about the lack of English translation.
 - **Eawag:** Received feedback from staff and highlighted that changes need to be structured, with finance clarified beforehand. The staff should be involved at all stages.
 - **ETH:** Major financial burden from a 23% student increase. Contracts are not being renewed, and administrative and technical staff are most affected. Retired employees are not being replaced. Concerns were raised about the impact of reorganization and whether the institutes would be more influential together.
 - **Common Agreement:** There is agreement that all staff should be involved as much as possible in the reorganization process. The main concerns are the potential impact on administrative and technical staff, whether roles and salaries will be maintained, and where the financial source to create a new digital institute will come from.
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5. NSL Salary System Interview

- A discussion took place regarding the upcoming interview on the salary system. Even though there is a salary system across the ETH domain, it is applied slightly differently in different places. PV representatives will organize themselves and meet before the interview with a third-party firm that is evaluating the salary system.
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6. Communication Strategies

- **Empa Example:** Empa shared an example of improving communication with staff through a newsletter.

- **PEKO Feedback:** Mixed feedback was discussed regarding PEKO's influence within their own institutes (directors). While sometimes we are asked to provide our input, the lack of feedback or difficulty being heard was noted.
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7. Next Meeting

- **Date:** Fall semester, hosted by PSI. The date is to be organized via Doodle.
- **Action Items:**
 - All inputs for the PEKO's answers regarding ETH restructuring should be added to the shared drive by **09.10**.
 - A joint statement summarizing the main concerns from each institute will be prepared, led by PV Empa.