

Meeting of the ETH Board on 3-4 March 2021

## **11 new professors appointed at ETH Zurich and EPFL**

**At its meeting of 3-4 March 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 three women and eight men as professors and awarded the title of professor to five individuals. It also took note of the resignations of five professors and thanked them for their services.**

Bern/Zurich, 5 March 2021

### **News appointments at ETH Zurich**

**Professor Catherine De Wolf** (\*1989), currently Assistant Professor at Delft University of Technology, Netherlands, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Circular Engineering for Architecture in the Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering. Catherine De Wolf conducts research on efficient, environmentally compatible construction processes. Her work has a particular emphasis on the processing and recycling of waste products. In her new post she will build on synergies with the Department of Mechanical and Process Engineering and deepen links with the Department of Architecture, the Department of Engineering Sciences at Empa, and NEST, the modular research and innovation building of Empa and Eawag.

**Professor Peter Hintz** (\*1991), currently Assistant Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, as Associate Professor of Mathematics and Physics in the Department of Mathematics. Peter Hintz is working on partial differential equations that arise in Einstein's general relativity theory. He has made important contributions to establishing stability proofs for Einstein's equations, particularly the stability of slowly rotating black holes in cosmological space-time. His teaching and research will introduce significant new ideas and methods to the disciplines of mathematics and physics at ETH Zurich.

**Dr Johanna Jacobi** (\*1983), currently Postdoctoral Researcher at the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) at the University of Bern, as Assistant Professor of Agroecological Transitions in the Department of Environmental Systems Science. Johanna Jacobi's research focuses on sustainability and socio-ecological resilience in agriculture and on issues relating to political ecology. With her appointment, the Department of Environmental Systems Science is strengthening the intra- and interdepartmental links between the research fields of sustainable agriculture and food systems, and areas connected with democracy research and governance.

**Professor Mutian Niu** (\*1989), currently Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, as Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Animal Nutrition in the Department of Environmental Systems Science. Mutian Niu's main area of research lies in quantifying and reducing environmentally relevant emissions from livestock farming, and is of considerable help in making the sustainable production of animal source foods more socially acceptable. His professorship is attached to the AgroVet-Strickhof Education and Research Competence

Centre and will make a substantial contribution to this cooperation between ETH Zurich, the University of Zurich and the Canton of Zurich.

**Professor Vincent Tassion** (\*1986), currently Assistant Professor at ETH Zurich, as Associate Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics. Vincent Tassion's research focuses on phase transitions in models of statistical physics. In recent years he has won multiple awards (including an ERC Starting Grant 2020) for his work in this field, and has published several groundbreaking articles that solve longstanding problems and open up new perspectives. In appointing a top scholar who has gained wide recognition at a young age, the Department of Mathematics is confirming its commitment to the study of probability theory.

#### **Promotions at ETH Zurich**

**Professor Randall J. Platt** (\*1987), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at ETH Zurich and the University of Basel, as Associate Professor of Biological Engineering in the Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering. Randall Platt will continue to hold a dual professorship with the University of Basel. His main research interest is the analysis of genetic defects with the potential to cause disease. The relevance of his research to the pharmaceutical industry has already led to successful partnerships with pharmaceutical and biotech companies. He has won a number of awards, including the 2019 Latsis Prize from ETH Zurich and an ERC Starting Grant.

**Professor Thomas Willwacher** (\*1983), currently Associate Professor at ETH Zurich, as Full Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics. Thomas Willwacher's research covers various aspects of algebra, geometry and topology and has strong links with mathematical physics. He has obtained a series of innovative findings at the point where these fields intersect. In particular, he discovered an unexpectedly close relationship between graph cohomology and the Grothendieck-Teichmüller group. His work has won several awards (including an ERC Starting Grant in 2016) and has been published in leading academic journals.

#### **New appointment at EPFL**

**Dr Andreas Fuster** (\*1980), currently Economic Adviser in the Department of Financial Stability at the Swiss National Bank, as Associate Professor of Finance at the College of Management of Technology at EPFL. Andreas Fuster's work focuses on analysing the real estate market, household indebtedness, financial regulation and the formation and evolution of macroeconomic expectations. His empirical work relies on machine learning and big data, as well as experimental approaches. The appointment at EPFL will enable Andreas Fuster to pursue his research in an area of vital importance to Switzerland, and give him the opportunity to help educate the next generation of financial engineers.

**Promotions at EPFL**

**Professor Drazen Dujic** (\*1978), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at EPFL, as Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering and Electronics in the School of Engineering. Drazen Dujic is a leading international expert in power electronics, particularly in the area of power supply and medium voltage direct current power transmission. He was awarded an ERC Consolidator Grant in 2018. Drazen Dujic will enhance this area of study at EPFL by attracting important academic and industrial partnerships, providing high-quality teaching, conducting innovative research, and forging links between different fields of science and engineering.

**Professor Jeremy Luterbacher** (\*1984), currently Tenure Track Assistant Professor at EPFL, as Associate Professor of Chemical Process Engineering in the School of Basic Sciences. Jeremy Luterbacher's work on biomass conversion technologies includes looking for an alternative to oil for manufacturing plastics and other common chemicals. He has won a number of prizes (including an ERC Starting Grant in 2017) for his outstanding results in the field of chemical engineering. This highly creative researcher is head of the Laboratory of Sustainable and Catalytic Processing, a field in which he is internationally regarded as a rising star.

**Professor Aleksandra Radenovic** (\*1975), currently Associate Professor at EPFL, as Full Professor of Bioengineering in the School of Engineering. Aleksandra Radenovic's main focus is nanophotonics and nanofluidics. Her most important scientific breakthroughs as an experimental physicist have been the manufacture of nanopores and their application in osmotic power generators and DNA sequencing. She is a world leader in the highly competitive field of nanotechnology and has filed three patents. Her innovative research and high-quality teaching make a key contribution to the education of engineers at EPFL.

**Award of the title of Professor**

**Dr Oleg Boyarkine** (\*1960), currently Senior Scientist at EPFL's School of Basic Sciences, as Adjunct Professor at EPFL. Oleg Boyarkine's research focuses on experimental molecular spectroscopy using lasers, and its application in a variety of areas. He was instrumental in EPFL's success with the spectroscopy of cryogenically cooled biomolecular ions from the outset and played a pioneering role in this field internationally.

**Dr Hugo Dil** (\*1977), currently Scientist at EPFL's School of Basic Sciences, as Adjunct Professor at EPFL. Hugo Dil investigates the physics of condensed matter and has achieved groundbreaking results using the dedicated experiment station he developed at the Swiss Light Source (SLS) at the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI). Researchers from all over the world now compete to use this unique installation at the PSI and benefit from his expertise.

**Dr Marcel Drabbels** (\*1966), currently Senior Scientist at EPFL's School of Basic Sciences, as Adjunct Professor at EPFL. Marcel Drabbels conducts research in the field of superfluid helium nanodroplets. His outstanding achievements in the area of molecular beam machines contributed to the construction of the low density matter (LDM) beamline for the FERMI free electron laser project in Trieste. This still functions on the same principles and is currently FERMI's most successful beamline.

**Dr Sebastian Huber** (\*1977), currently Senior Scientist in the Department of Physics at ETH Zurich, as Adjunct Professor at ETH Zurich. Sebastian Huber's research centres around topological mechanics and the foundations of quantum statistical many-body systems. He is a distinguished researcher who has won numerous awards (including an ERC Consolidator Grant in 2018) and conducts pioneering work on condensed matter, a field in which he applies machine learning to the theoretical investigation of quantum phase transitions.

**Dr Fernando Perez Cruz** (\*1973), currently Chief Data Scientist at the Swiss Data Science Center (SDSC) and Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science at ETH Zurich, as Adjunct Professor at ETH Zurich. Fernando Perez Cruz is an internationally acclaimed researcher in the area of data science and machine learning. His key role at the SDSC includes managing and coordinating interdisciplinary research projects and supporting research throughout the ETH Domain in areas such as personalised medicine, climate research, architecture and digital humanities.

### **Departures from ETH Zurich**

**Professor Ernst Hafen** (\*1956), currently Full Professor of Molecular Developmental Biology in the Department of Biology at ETH Zurich, is to retire at the end of July 2021. Ernst Hafen became a full professor at ETH Zurich in 2005 and served as President of ETH Zurich from 2005 to 2006. After stepping down from the latter post, he continued working as a professor at the Institute of Molecular Systems Biology (holding a dual professorship with the University of Zurich). He has won prestigious awards for his research into genes and signalling pathways that play an essential role in growth control and metabolic processes. In 2014 the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute rated him one of the 99 most influential contemporary thinkers in the German-speaking world.

**Professor Michael Kreuzer** (\*1956), currently Full Professor of Animal Nutrition in the Department of Environmental Systems Science at ETH Zurich, is to retire at the end of July 2021. Michael Kreuzer joined ETH Zurich as Full Professor of Animal Nutrition in 1994. His main areas of research are the impact of animal nutrition on climate change, as well as global nutrition and food quality. The offices he has held at ETH Zurich include Vice-President of the North-South Centre from 2007 to 2012, and Dean and Study Delegate of the Department of Agriculture and Food Science from 2004 to 2006. He is also a member of the executive board of AgroVet-Strickhof and serves on a number of scientific committees.

**Professor Michele Parrinello** (\*1945), Full Professor of Computational Science in the Department of Chemistry and Applied Biosciences at ETH Zurich, has retired with retroactive effect as of 31 December 2020. Michele Parrinello has been a full professor at ETH Zurich since 2001, holding a dual professorship with the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) since 2011. His research has a focus on molecular structures and properties. He is one of the foremost authorities and most frequently cited scientists in his area of expertise and has been awarded numerous prizes, including the Marcel Benoist Prize (often referred to as the "Swiss Nobel Prize") in 2011 for his work on computer-aided modelling in the field of molecular dynamics.

**Professor Erich J. Windhab** (\*1956), currently Full Professor of Food Process Engineering in the Department of Health Sciences and Technology at ETH Zurich, is to retire at the end of July 2021. Erich Windhab joined ETH Zurich as a full professor in 1992. His research has a particular focus on fluid and powder technological processes for functional microstructuring of multiphase systems. He has pursued several interdisciplinary projects with the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) and within ETH Zurich, and has held responsible positions on a number of professional and academic bodies. The latter include serving as president of the Swiss Rheology Group/Polymer Society, as director of the Swiss Competence Centre of Rheology and as a member of the European Academy of Sciences.

#### **Departure from EPFL**

**Professor Roberto Gargiani** (\*1956), currently Full Professor of the History of Architecture and Construction in the School of Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering at EPFL, is to retire at the end of February 2022. Roberto Gargiani joined EPFL as a visiting professor in 1999 and was appointed to a full professorship in 2004. The use of concrete is one of the principal focuses of his wide-ranging research. He is head of the History and Theory of Architecture Laboratory (LTH3), with which he organises numerous conferences and seminars that play a key role in EPFL's academic instruction and enhance its reputation. Roberto Gargiani has won numerous awards and has been an asset to EPFL for more than two decades, during which time he has inspired thousands of students.

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

#### **Enquiries**

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The ETH Board is the strategic management and supervisory body of the ETH Domain. The ETH Domain is made up of the two Federal Institutes of Technology, i.e. ETH Zurich and EPFL, as well as the four federal research institutes PSI, WSL, Empa and Eawag. The members of the ETH Board are appointed by the Swiss Federal Council. The ETH Board supervises the development plans of the institutions, is responsible for strategic management accounting and ensures coordination. It draws up the budget and the financial statements of the ETH Domain and coordinates the value maintenance and continued functionality of the properties. It is the authority responsible for appointments and represents the ETH Domain before the federal authorities. A staff assists the ETH Board in the preparation and implementation of its business.