

HUMER FOUNDATION

FOR ACADEMIC TALENT



IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS, EVERYTHING WAS BETTER ...

Dr Franz B. Humer, Chairman of the Foundation Board

... that's what people and media of all stripes would constantly have us believe. The numerous problems that beset us in the present, and a certain anxiety about the future, seem to cause us, time and again, to take a misty-eyed look at the past, in which – consciously or unconsciously – we tend to ignore the many areas of human life where recent years and decades have brought significant progress and improvements. This holds true for fields such as medicine and engineering, environment and conservation, but particularly also for education. While just a few decades ago a comprehensive education was still all too often the preserve of a privileged few from "good families", nowadays, at least in Europe, America and Asia, family background is, thankfully, no longer a crucial factor. Of course, there's still a lot of work to be done when it comes to equal opportunities in education. But the strides forward that have been made in this area are immense.

The romanticisation of the past that I mentioned above has no place at all when talking about doctoral study. Here – as in many other areas – the opposite applies. A lot of things were worse in the old days. In many faculties, post-graduate training was little more than an adjunct to Masters studies, which people tried to complete as far as possible in parallel with starting a career. Independent scholarly works as doctoral theses were the exception; the summarisation of established approaches and theories the rule. There was a propensity to quote the work of others, and thus not infrequently make other people's statements one's own.

Not least as a result of the Bologna Reform of Europe's universities, doctoral study has been placed on an entirely new footing. Nowadays, if you want to study for a PhD, three years of serious academic work is a requirement. In most cases, this also includes semesters abroad, which adds to the quality of the work produced. Since its inception six years ago our Foundation has been providing funds for research to enable also those without the necessary financial means to take on such a demanding course of study.

Our work with the universities in Salzburg, Zurich and Basel in particular has borne much fruit. These universities are responsible for selecting the PhD students, but also for supervising and mentoring them during their studies. During this phase, our office maintains close contact with our associates at the three universities, in order to respond promptly and flexibly to any problems or changes, which certainly can occur in the course of producing a doctoral thesis. We on the Foundation Board make an effort to get to know "our" PhD students at specially organised events, and to understand the scientific or academic intentions that drive their work.

And so, we will continue in the years ahead to facilitate the production of dissertations that make a tangible contribution to coping with the challenges of the future!



PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012

Urs Lauffer, executive member of the Foundation Board

Our Foundation, set up in spring 2007, aims to fund talented young scholars in Switzerland, Austria and other European countries, on an exclusively non-profit basis. This is done in close co-operation with the universities involved.

In the sixth year of our operations, we have once again granted the University of Zurich funding to the tune of CHF 300 000 for doctoral training in its main research area, "Asia and Europe". This sum will be used to fund the work of six doctoral candidates. In 2012, the University of Salzburg also received the same funding as the year before, a sum of Euro 180 000. With this support, during the year under review six candidates have continued their doctoral work at the post-graduate teaching centre in Salzburg; the first group of doctoral theses co-funded by us was completed in 2011. And finally, the Foundation has again supported the University of Basel with the grant of CHF 200 000 for its main research focus on "Africa". This money is being used to fund four doctoral candidates. Our Foundation is thus continuing to fund doctoral studies for a total of 16 exceptionally talented young academics.

The intensive collaboration with the relevant staff at the three universities is proving to be worthwhile. The quality of the individual research projects is regularly monitored by the professors involved. The Humer Foundation therefore still does not assess applications sent directly to it by doctoral candidates.

During the year under review, the Foundation Board met in two sessions, in Salzburg and Arlesheim. The main focus of these sessions was the evaluation and approval of requests for financial support for doctoral candidates, which was undertaken on the basis of thorough, balanced assessments put forward by the three universities.

In addition, the Foundation's statutory business (annual accounts, year-end closing, auditor's report, elections) was dealt with.

We periodically review the success of our funding activities in the presence of the relevant professors and individual doctoral candidates. In doing so, the Foundation Board assesses both the effectiveness of our activity as a measure of the usefulness of our work, and the efficiency of our operations, that is, the profitability of the allocation of our Foundation's resources. Based on this, and using specific individual cases as templates, we determine the policy of our Foundation. And finally, we also deal with all financial questions and risks (including investment principles, which are regularly reviewed and adjusted if need be), and oversee the work of our offices.

The Foundation's activities are financed first and foremost through yields on assets and donations, and secondly through transfers from capital reserves. Despite a welcome financial gain, the organisational capital decreased to 4.7 million francs. In the next three years, our Foundation will nevertheless be able to continue its funding activity at the current level – that is, with sums between 500 000 and 800 000 francs.

The office is managed by Lauffer & Frischknecht, communication management consultancy, on a consultative basis. Stéphanie Ramel takes care of the administration, and Fritz Frischknecht, MA Econ., is responsible for the accounts department. The management of the Foundation's assets was entrusted to InCentive Asset Management. Swiss GAAP FER 21 is used for the annual financial statements.

CURRENT THESES

UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH – ASIA AND EUROPE

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

MOTAZ ALNAOUQ – The Right to Life in the Palestinian Society

MIRIAM BISHOKARMA – Contested Spaces – Geographies of democracy in the making of Gorkhaland

AMIR HAMID – Screened Bodies, Printed Books and Hypertext. Yusuf al-Qaradawi and the Medial Construction of Religious-Legal Authority in a Transnational Public Space

ELIZA ISABAEVA – Social Citizenship from Belwo and the Making of State in Kyrgyzstan

LINDA MADUZ – Analyzing the Causes of Welfare State Development in East Asia

MATTHÄUS REST – Water Power. Discourses on Modernity and Development around the Nepalese Arun-3 Hydropower Project

UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG – EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES

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

LAURA ANDREEA BARONI – Interest Group Influence in the European Union: which factors determine whether access translates into influence?

CAL LE GALL – Euroscepticism in the new Member States of the European Union

IRYNA KRISTENSEN – P3s and Innovation in the EU

JÖRG PAETZOLD – Redistribution and Inequality in times of globalization

LUCIA SCHULTEN – Social Market Rules, European Integration and the Welfare State

ERWIN STOLZ – The sociology of living arrangements in Europe

UNIVERSITY OF BASEL – AFRICA

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

STEPHANIE BISHOP – Zambian Water Diaries. Technology in Practice

BARBARA HEER – Field studies in Maputo and Johannesburg

PIERRICK LEU – The constitution of road traffic. Ouagadougou's two-wheeler mobility

RICHARD SAMBAIGA – Adolescents, Sex and the City in Southern Tanzania

KEY FINANCIAL DATA 12/31/2012

	2012	2011	2010
Financial support	718 000	699 000	773 000
Donations	50 000	50 000	200 000
Financial results	293 000	685 000	1 269 000
Organisational capital	4 671 000	5 087 000	5 083 000

Since it was established in 2007 the foundation has provided financial support totalling CHF 3 400 000.

FOUNDATION BOARD

CHAIRMAN

Dr Franz B. Humer (Erlenbach)
Chairman of the Board of Directors
of Roche Holding Ltd

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Dr Gottlieb Keller (Zurich)
Member of the Corporate Executive Committee
of F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd

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Renate Gerber (Arlesheim)
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Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of
Fritz-Gerber-Stiftung for talented young people

Urs Lauffer (Steinmaur)
Partner Lauffer & Frischknecht,
Management Consultants for Communication

OFFICE

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