

HUMER FOUNDATION

FOR ACADEMIC TALENT



DOCTORAL TRAINING UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Dr Franz B. Humer, Chairman of the Foundation Board

The figures speak for themselves, really: more and more students are completing their education at a European university with a Master's degree and supplementing this later with a Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) or a Master of Business Administration (MBA). Let's be honest, attaining a doctorate is hardly a consideration any more in such academic careers. And yet in the last few years, leading European universities have invested heavily in their doctoral training and made it more professional and international. How has this apparent contradiction come about? And, against this background, is it right that our Foundation continues to focus on funding the doctoral studies of exceptionally talented young scholars?

Discussions with the relevant staff at the three universities with which we have been cooperating closely since our Foundation was set up seven years ago have clearly revealed, once again, why these universities are investing so much energy and money in doctoral training even after the implementation of the Bologna Process. Firstly, a doctoral qualification undisputedly remains a requirement for any future research and teaching activity at university level. And it is essential to be able to attract the best young academic talent to carry out this important work. Secondly, in the three years of intensive academic work – including at least a year spent at a university abroad – the young academics obtain an extremely valuable additional skill for their later career which simply cannot be gained during a Master's course. The practical value of this doctoral period is something that is impressed

on me as the chairman of a pioneering pharmaceutical company: young employees who have completed this type of training often demonstrate an astonishing intellectual maturity even in their first practical assignment, combined with the ability to grasp complex interrelationships quickly and achieve demanding objectives.

A similar picture emerged from my discussions with those doctoral candidates we are able to support in Zurich, Basle and Salzburg. These young scholars are certainly not happy to settle for a Master's degree – they are striving for academic excellence. And they are grateful that they are able to achieve this in an extremely professional environment. Many doctoral students have not yet decided whether they want to go on to work in research and teaching or to pursue a career in a business. But they all agree that doctoral studies open up incredible opportunities for them.

For these reasons, our Foundation has no doubt that we will remain committed to doctoral studies and we look forward to continuing our cooperation with the universities in Zurich, Basle and Salzburg. This will enable us, in the future, to continue facilitating the production of theses that rightly find recognition and attract attention not only in the academic world, but also in the commercial sphere.



PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013

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 in Zurich, Basle and Salzburg.

In the seventh 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 was used to fund the work of six doctoral candidates. In 2013, the University of Salzburg also received the same funding as the year before, a sum of EUR 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 once again supported the University of Basle with a grant of CHF 200 000 for its main research focus on "Africa". This money was used to fund four doctoral candidates. Our Foundation thus continued 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 consider applications sent directly to it by doctoral candidates.

During the year under review, the Foundation Board met in two sessions, in Salzburg and Basle. 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 made by the three universities. In addition, the Foundation's statutory business (annual accounts, year-end closing, auditor's report, elections) was dealt with.

Furthermore, the Foundation Board periodically reviews the success of funding activities, in the presence of professors and individual doctoral candidates. In doing so, we assess both the effectiveness and efficiency of our work, thus measuring the usefulness and the profitability of the allocation of our Foundation's resources. Based on this, and using specific individual cases as templates, we then 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), and oversee the work of our office.

The Foundation's activities are financed first and foremost through yields on assets and donations, and secondly through transfers from capital reserves. After several very successful years with considerable financial gains, the Foundation recorded a financial loss in 2013. As a result, the organisation's capital decreased to CHF 3.7 million. Nevertheless, in the next three years our Foundation will be able to continue its funding activity at the current level.

The office is managed by Lauffer & Frischknecht, a communication management consultancy, on an advisory 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: The Case of the Death Penalty from Comparative Human Rights Perspective

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

AMIR HAMID – On Bodies, Books and Hypertext: Mediating Islamic Norms of Gender and Religious Violence in the Transnational Arab Public Sphere

ELIZA ISABAEVA – Social Citizenship from Below and the Making of State in Kyrgyzstan: Migrants Making a Living in the Squatter Settlements of Bishkek

AYAKA LÖSCHKE – A Sociological Analysis of the Japanese Anti-Nuclear Movement after the Nuclear Reactor Accident of Fukushima: The Example of the Mother's Network «National Network of Parents to Protect Children from Radiation»

TOBIAS WEISS – Media and Nuclear Power in Japan. Tricksters, Lapdogs and Agenda Setters

UNIVERSITY OF BASLE – AFRICA

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

STEPHANIE BISHOP – Zambian Water Diaries. Technology in Practice

MELANIE BOEHI – The South African Botanical Complex: Plants, Nature and Urban Life in Cape Town (ca. 1910-2013)

PIERRICK LEU – Riding Motorcycles, Making Urban Road Traffic. An Ethnomethodological Perspective on Mobility in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

JOSCHKA PHILIPPS – Explosive Youth: Political protests in Conakry, Guinea and Kampala, Uganda

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 Parliament

CAL LE GALL – Explaining variation in EU-issue-voting: The role of attribution of responsibility

IRYNA KRISTENSEN – Regional Innovation Policy and Public Private Partnerships

JÖRG PAETZOLD – Essays on the Political Economy of Labour Market Policies and Taxation in Europe

LUCIA SCHULTEN – Scope and Legal Consequence of the Constitutional Principle of Solidarity in the Law of the European Union – The Individual and unional Solidarity (working title)

ERWIN STOLZ – Elderly care arrangements and social inequality within European welfare states: A comparative analysis of 16 countries

COMPLETED THESES

In 2013, the following theses made possible by our Foundation were completed:

UNIVERSITY BASLE – AFRICA

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

UNIVERSITY ZURICH – ASIA AND EUROPE

DILYARA SULEYMANOVA – Schooling the Sense of Belonging: Identity Politics and Educational Change in Post-Soviet Tatarstan

KEY FINANCIAL DATA 12/31/2013

in CHF

	2013	2012	2011
Financial support	724 000	718 000	699 000
Annual result	-903 000	-415 000	-196 000
Organisational capital	3 693 000	4 671 000	5 087 000

Since it was established in 2007 the foundation has provided financial support totalling CHF 4 200 000.

FOUNDATION BOARD

CHAIRMAN

Dr Franz B. Humer (Erlenbach)
Chairman of the Board of Directors
of the International Centre for Missing
and Exploited Children

MEMBERS

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

VICE CHAIRWOMAN

Renate Gerber (Arlesheim)
Honorary Senator of the University of Salzburg,
Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the
Fritz Gerber Foundation for talented young people

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

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