life

ETH zürich

At home in the world of art

Sandra Flatt on her collection, p. 8

The ETH community magazine

December 2024

Dear ETH community,

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become an essential part of our daily lives. We use tools like DeepL for translation, rely on ChatGPT for answering questions and are aware that AI can manipulate or even create images from scratch. But what about science communication? You guessed it – AI tools have become vital in this field too. They are, however, no substitute for the human ability to engage critically with content. We spoke to science writers about how they incorporate AI tools into their daily work and what potential they see in them.

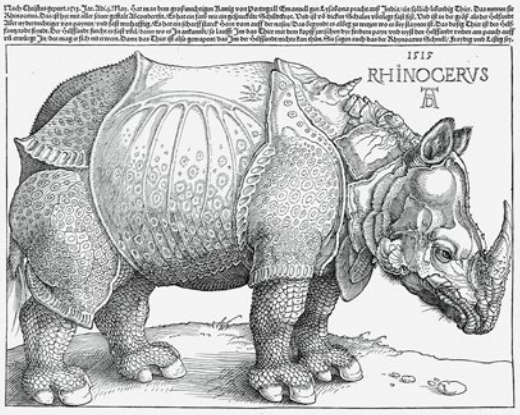
To wrap up the year, we visited the ETH Hangar at the Innovation Park located at Dübendorf airfield. During our visit, we learned about the daily life of individuals working on focus projects, both past and present, such as AMZ, Cellsius and Swissloop. The hangar provides ETH students with the space and opportunities needed to develop products in the fields of mobility, intelligent systems and aerospace, helping them bring these innovations to market as quickly as possible. As we look ahead, it's also time to welcome 2025! The *life* editorial team would like to wish all ETH members happy holidays and a wonderful start to the new year.

RESPECT
REFLECT
RESPOND
ETHZ.CH/RESPECT

Events on the subject of respect

Events on the subject of respect – for all students, researchers and staff at ETH Zurich. How do you handle strong emotions successfully? How do you create a good culture of collaboration in daily practice? Experts will be presenting useful facts, tips and strategies at the live events (online or on site).

→ ethz.ch/respekt-events-en



© Albrecht Dürer, Rhinocerus, Graphische Sammlung ETH Zurich

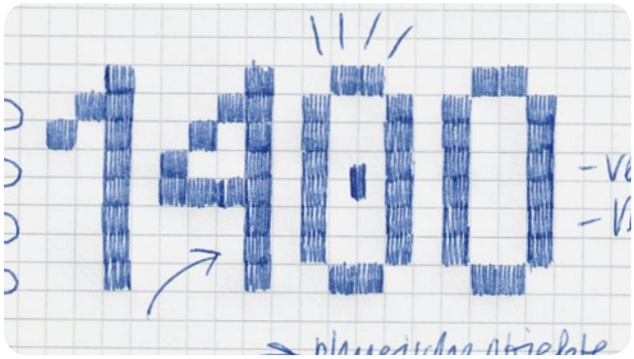
Albrecht Dürer's printed works

The works of Albrecht Dürer are currently on display in the Graphische Sammlung ETH Zurich's exhibition "Defying norms, setting standards". This exhibition highlights the relevance of Dürer's works in the context of today's art discourse and will run until 9 March 2025.

→ gs.ethz.ch/en/

Executive Board's new year town hall meeting

At the new year town hall meeting, the Executive Board will review 2024 and look ahead to 2025. Make a note of the time and date now: Tuesday, 14 January 2025, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. The link to the online event will be sent out in January via email.



#StayCurious

In November, around 1,400 employees took part in the #StayCurious event promoting lifelong learning. Participants were encouraged to think about topics such as learning and digitalisation, the acceleration of society, lack of time, leadership, work and purpose. If you missed the event, you can find the recordings in the Lifelong Learning Hub L3H. Further information is available at:

→ ethz.ch/l3h-en

Congratulations!

ETH Zurich celebrated its 169th birthday at this year's ETH Day on 16 November. As part of the celebrations, VSETH President Nic Cantieni presented the Award for Best Teaching to ETH professor Nicola Spaldin from the Department of Materials.

→ ethz.ch/eth-day

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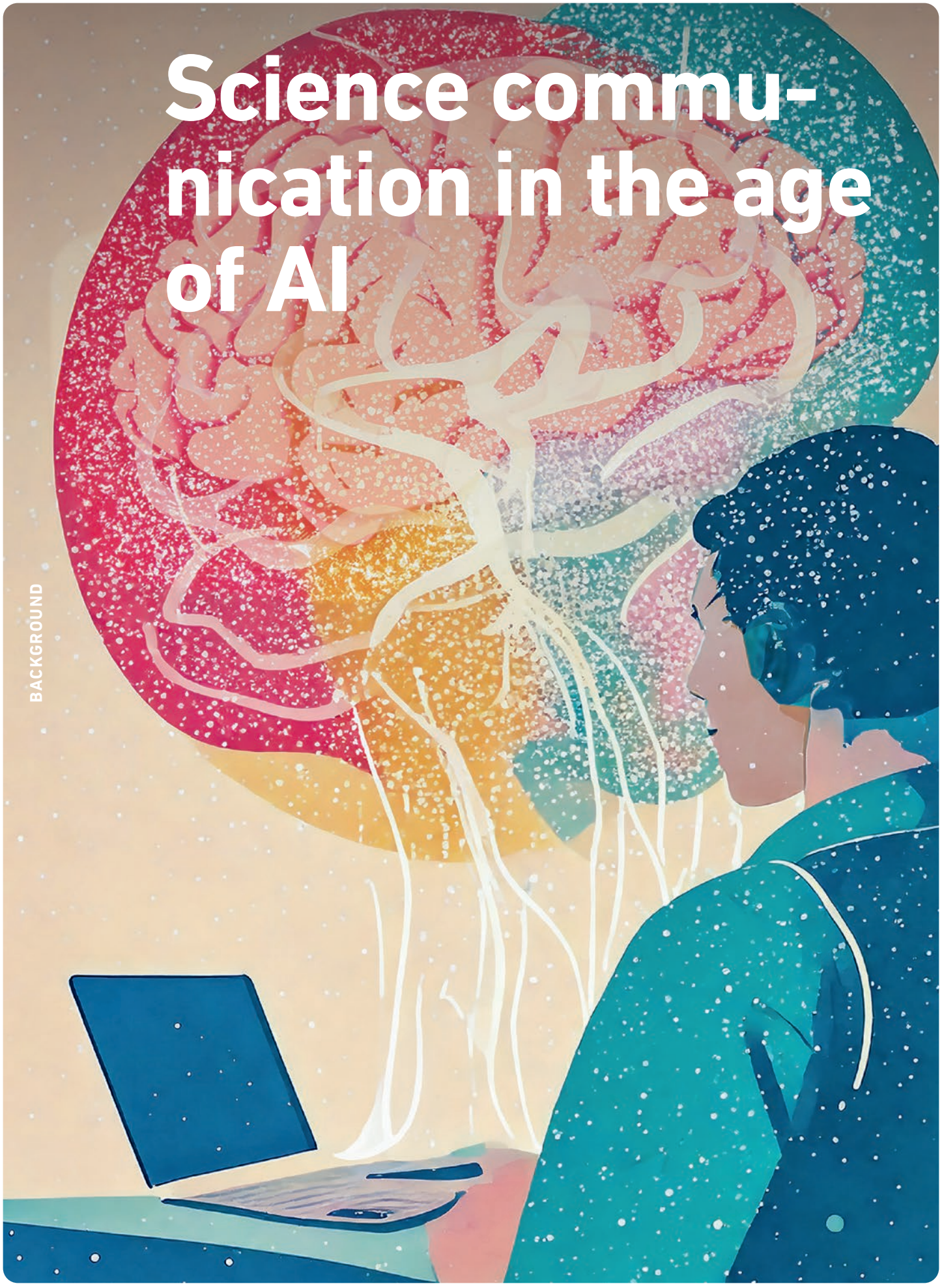
Science communication in the age of AI



BACKGROUND

AI tools have become essential in science communication. However, they cannot replace the human ability to engage critically with content.

A study with the clunky title "Single-nucleus transcriptomics identifies separate classes of UCP1 and futile cycle adipocytes" recently landed in Fabio Bergamin's inbox. Bergamin writes about scientific topics for ETH Zurich Corporate Communications. His job is to present research findings in a way that is both comprehensible and interesting for laypeople. Bergamin, who has a background as a biologist and science journalist, uses various AI tools to assist him in this task.

"When I come across a new paper, I need to quickly assess how interesting its findings are for the general public. I use ChatGPT to help me with this." Bergamin has developed a customised chatbot that summarises the content of the paper according to predefined criteria: the research question, key findings, potential applications and possible engaging elements to capture the interest of general readers. In just a few clicks, 24 small-print PDF pages can be condensed into a single A4 page highlighting the key information about the study. "It's a great way of getting a quick overview of a study. However, the chatbot is no substitute for a thorough and critical reading of the paper," says Bergamin.

AI tools as an aid

The communication expert asks the AI chatbot to clarify unclear terms from the paper – UCP1, for instance. The response comes in seconds: "UCP1 is a protein that helps fat cells convert energy into heat instead of storing it as fat," says ChatGPT. However, Bergamin would never rely on such answers without verifying them first. As the language models used for AI applications such as ChatGPT are prone to errors, caution is always advised. He therefore views AI tools primarily as aids: "ChatGPT allows me to quickly grasp the content of a paper." While chatting with a chatbot can help him prepare for an interview with the author of a study, he believes that AI can never replace direct contact with researchers. "For me, our scientists are still the most important source of information," says Bergamin.

He still writes his texts and titles himself, stating: "Even the best AI cannot entirely take away this creative process from me." Once he has produced a first draft, however, Bergamin revises it using DeepL Write, an AI-based editing tool that suggests more elegant phrasing for lengthy passages and corrects spelling and grammatical errors. "Using AI has made my texts read more fluently," Bergamin explains. Before he can publish his final article entitled "Beige fat cells with a 'Sisyphus mechanism'", he needs an accompanying image. He aims to expand the image backgrounds to fit the correct format, and the new AI features in Photoshop will assist him in this task.

A game changer?

According to Mike S. Schäfer, what Fabio Bergamin is doing at ETH Zurich is by no means an isolated case. "AI applications are spreading rapidly and are now part of daily work in many communication departments and editorial teams," says the Professor of Science Communication at the University of Zurich. But what does this mean in practical terms? Schäfer views generative AI as a potential game changer. Surveys indicate that young scientists in particular want to engage more in science communication but often lack the time to do so. Schäfer believes that AI applications could address this issue by accelerating the process of preparing content on research topics for various target audiences and communication channels.

Furthermore, he believes that AI applications could enhance the dialogue between researchers and society. "Specially trained chatbots could enable larger audiences to ask questions about topics such as climate or health. These chatbots could provide examples and explain specific concepts or processes based on the users' existing knowledge and they could do this repeatedly and at different levels," says Schäfer. This approach could provide people who have less of an aptitude for science with an easy way to engage in discussions about research topics.

Schäfer is aware that the extensive use of AI tools in science commu-

"Even the best AI can't take the creative process away from me."

nication poses certain risks: "We need to understand that large language models such as ChatGPT can make mistakes – they can hallucinate. What's more, their responses are based on patterns found in the training data, which may also contain biases."

Learning to write prompts

The effectiveness of AI tools largely depends on how well we communicate with them. Mirko Bischofberger, an experienced science communicator who runs workshops at ETH Zurich on using AI tools in science communication, stresses the importance of crafting good prompts. He explains that providing clear instructions to an AI tool is crucial if you want to receive useful answers.

"Before posing a question to the language model, it is essential to give it as much context as possible," he adds. This includes specifying the role you want the chatbot to assume and identifying your target audience. For example, you might say: "You are an expert in science communication and are addressing the general public". Next, you should formulate your question as clearly as possible and provide examples if needed. Additionally, each prompt should state the desired format of the chatbot's response, such as bullet points or running text. Anyone interested in finding out more about crafting prompts and exploring various AI tools used in science communication is encouraged to attend his workshop in the Spring Semester.

"The ability to prompt well is crucial to getting useful answers."

The course entitled "Exploring AI for Science Communication" is part of the Communication Academy, a continuing education and training programme for science communication aimed at ETH Zurich researchers.

ethz.ch/
communication-academy-en

Author
Christoph Elhardt

Images
AI-generated

Where did D-BAUG doctoral student Katharina Henggeler take this photo?

Take a guess and send your answer to life@hk.ethz.ch by 25 January 2025.
You could be the lucky winner of one of two ETH SIGG Traveller Drone 0.6 l water bottles.

Prize

SNAPSHOT

Got a photo?
Send us your own snapshot for the next edition: life@hk.ethz.ch

ANSWER

October 2024 edition: Third-year mediamatics apprentice Anouk Schuler took this photo in the crypt in the Main Building on the Zentrum campus. Congratulations to our winner, Catherine Burnat.


PORTRAIT

“Art has to speak to me emotionally”

Art is more than just a hobby for Sandra Flatt; it is a passion. The artworks she collects represent much more to her than merely a pastime.

When Sandra Flatt, who works at the ETH Library, talks about art, her eyes light up and she becomes even more animated than usual. Anyone visiting her apartment in an old building in Zurich will quickly discover that her entire life revolves around collecting art. Her home showcases nearly 200 paintings, photographs and sculptures, making it a truly unique space. “People are sometimes a bit overwhelmed when they visit for the first time,” she says with a laugh.

An art lover from an early age

Sandra, who was born in Hamburg, developed a love of art early on: “My father collected maritime art. We would go to flea markets together and root out things like antique captain’s tableware or models of three-masted ships. For a short while, I even wanted to study art.” On her father’s advice, however, Sandra got herself a “sensible qualification” as a publisher at a renowned German publishing house. “Working with literature meant I still had a connection to art.” After completing a six-month internship at a literary agency in New York, studying communications and working for several years as an adviser at an international advertising agency, studying art wasn’t on the cards anymore.

Private art consulting

The spark that ignited her passion for collecting came later, while she was working for a Swiss insurance company. “The company had an art collection and organised a warehouse sale in order to sell some of it off. That’s when I realised how much I love discovering and collecting artworks.” This didn’t go unnoticed for long. “Soon my colleagues were asking me to go to the sale with them and recommend works,” says Sandra. “Sometimes people ask me why I’m not a professional art broker. But my work at ETH is so varied and I really enjoy it. So I’ll keep the art consulting private.”

Art and science

Sandra has been in her current role in the ETH Library since 2018. Working in Marketing and Communication allows her to combine her passion for art with her interest in science. “What fascinates me about our researchers’ work is their dedication to the essential questions and their desire to understand more about the world, how it works and to solve fundamental problems. I also think it’s great that ETH brings together science and art under one roof, with collections such as the Graphische Sammlung and the literature archives. Art and science have always gone hand in hand – as we can see from the scientific drawings from the Renaissance, for example.”

Combating ephemerality

Sandra’s art collection has been assembled intuitively. “An artwork must resonate with me emotionally. Each piece can be striking for different reasons: the vibrancy of the colours, the lines, or the narrative that the artwork conveys.”

The large half-length portrait by US artist Clio Newton is the centrepiece of her collection: “What I particularly like about this piece is the hyperrealistic technique using coloured pencils and the fact that we cannot fully see the sitter’s expression.”

Sandra is also fascinated by the connections that art can create – between works, but also between people. She found the latter particularly important during the pandemic when personal contact was limited. “I discovered a platform on Instagram where artists were presenting their works. It was a wonderful opportunity to discover art, and the platform also helped to support artists while the galleries were closed,” says Sandra, reflecting on that time. “Some of the artists I made contact with back then have since died. Their works will help to maintain that sense of connectedness and keep their memory alive.”

An art lover, not an artist

One question remains: as she loves art so much, how often does Sandra find herself reaching for a paintbrush? “Never,” she says straight away. “I went through a phase of painting a lot when I was 19. But not particularly well,” she says. “You can have art in your blood without having to be an artist yourself – especially if you enjoy the subject of art itself and the people behind it.”

Author
Mona Blum

Photo
Marco Rosasco

Silke interviews André

In the **Dominoes** column, ETH members interview a colleague of their choice. In the next edition, this person then goes on to interview someone they know or want to become better acquainted with.

Silke Schön
57
Lecturer in D-PHYS and member of FIRST-Lab operations team
Has been at ETH for 27 years

André Baumgartner
59
Works in Purchasing Coordination
Has been at ETH for 17 years

André Baumgartner gives Silke Schön an insight into the benefits of purchasing coordination. The negotiating skills he has acquired even come in useful on his holidays.

Silke Schön: How did you end up at ETH?

André Baumgartner: I have been at ETH for 17 years and was involved in building up the Purchasing team from the ground up. There were just two of us back then – but today the Purchasing Coordination team has grown to ten members. Before joining ETH, I worked at Schweizer Radio, where I was also responsible for establishing the Purchasing team. The experience proved invaluable when I started at ETH.

Silke: What does your daily work involve?

André: Today, I am responsible for integrating the catalogues we offer on the ETHIS ordering platform. This encompasses everything from the initial contact with relevant suppliers to negotiating prices and contracts and engaging in technical discussions with the IT department. At the same time, I strive to get the best possible terms and prices for ETH with suppliers who do not offer a catalogue. It's an interesting field to work in. We even bought a flock of sheep once. However, most of our purchases consist of scientific equipment, services, vehicles and things like that.

Silke: That doesn't sound very easy to me.

André: The main challenge we face is that we often lack information about what is being purchased at ETH as well as when and where these purchases occur. However, there is real potential for us in this area. By leveraging our experience to negotiate, we can often secure lower prices, discounts or additional services. That adds value for professors, institutes and technical platforms like the FIRST-Lab. To give you an example: one of the institutes recently relocated and needed to purchase new laboratory equipment totalling 300,000 Swiss francs. Through renegotiation, we were able to save the institute 45,000 francs.

Silke: Does that mean all large purchases should be made via Purchasing Coordination?

André: (laughing) In an ideal world, yes. But our team would very quickly reach its limits due to limited resources, unfortunately. At a time when everyone is discussing cost-saving measures, I think our work is more important than ever.

Silke: I have another question about the catalogues on ETHIS. How has the way they work changed over the years?

André: Seventeen years ago, any orders over 10,000 francs had to be entered in FileMaker (a database system) and signed via fax. Today, everything is processed electronically via the procurement request. The world has definitely become more digital! However, there are still physical shops on campus where you can purchase items and take them home right away, just like in a supermarket. We also assist them in negotiating prices with suppliers.

Silke: We know each other from the nitrogen committee. Are there other projects like that at ETH?

André: Yes, there are. We have a pooling system for nitrogen, which allows us to purchase it for all of ETH. The advantage of this system is that there are relatively few suppliers, making negotiations easier to manage. In contrast, procuring other products, such as pipettes, is more challenging because there are around 45 suppliers offering about 100 different brands. We hope that the procurement platform on ETHIS will provide us with better insights into which suppliers and brands are really in demand at ETH.

Silke: Working on negotiations must be exhausting. How do you switch off in your free time?

André: Sports play a major role in my daily life. I love mountain biking – sometimes I cycle from my home in Langnau am Albis to the Octavo building and back again in the evening. It takes me 45 to 55 minutes each way. This way I get my exercise for the day and can spend more quality time with my family. My wife and I have three children, the youngest of whom is twenty.

Silke: Didn't you and your family take an extended break a while ago?

André: Yes. One of my favourite memories is from twelve years ago when my family and I spent three months travelling across America. We used various modes of transportation, including a motorhome, plane, houseboat and rental car. We started our journey in New York, made a brief visit to Canada, travelled to San Francisco on the west coast, explored the national parks and eventually finished our trip in Florida

Silke: Sounds like travelling is one of your hobbies.

André: Definitely! Sometimes, I even use my negotiating skills while on holiday – like when I visit the bazaar in Cairo. I really enjoy bargaining with sellers and figuring out how to get the best possible price while ensuring good quality. But it's not for everybody – you need to have a knack for facts and figures.

Recorded by
Deborah Kyburz

A visit to the ETH Hangar

9.30 Cyril Kubr welcomes us to his office and explains to us why the ETH hangar exists.

10.00 Every Tuesday, the students from the ETH Feasibility Lab hold a meeting to discuss the week's developments with the companies involved in their projects.

11.30 Marius Robinson from Cellsius explains the best way to install the fuel cell drive in the aircraft, ensuring that flight behaviour remains unchanged and safety is maintained.

It's a foggy day with visibility below 50 metres. On the apron of Dübendorf airfield, there are poster boards with pictures of outer space, driverless vehicles and a hyperloop demonstrator that is being used to test the concept of travelling in a vacuum. This site is one of the cornerstones of Swiss aviation and is where students from ETH Zurich have found the space they need to work on focus projects. ETH has been renting two former hangars and an old canteen building at the Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich since 2023. Cyril Kubr, Head of the ETH Hangar, welcomes us into his inviting office featuring armchairs, vintage pictures and a huge flat screen on the wall.

"There is a huge amount of interest from the industry," he says, leaving us in no doubt about the success of the concept. The aim is to develop products in the fields of mobility, intelligent systems and aerospace, with the objective of bringing them to market as quickly as possible. Cyril, who has a background in the spin-off scene, was previously involved in setting up an incubator for space travel startups at ETH. "Research and entrepreneurship go hand in hand here. It's not just about companies acquiring the latest knowledge or commissioning projects – they are also interested in attracting and retaining talent."

Research meets development

Focus projects such as AMZ, Cellsius and Swissloop are based here. Students can apply each year, but according to Cyril, there are usually three times as many applicants as available places. He ensures that companies and projects are a good match, fostering mutual interest and enhancing each other's work. "The combination of technical excellence, product development and opportunities for collaboration is highly attractive for industrial companies," says Cyril.

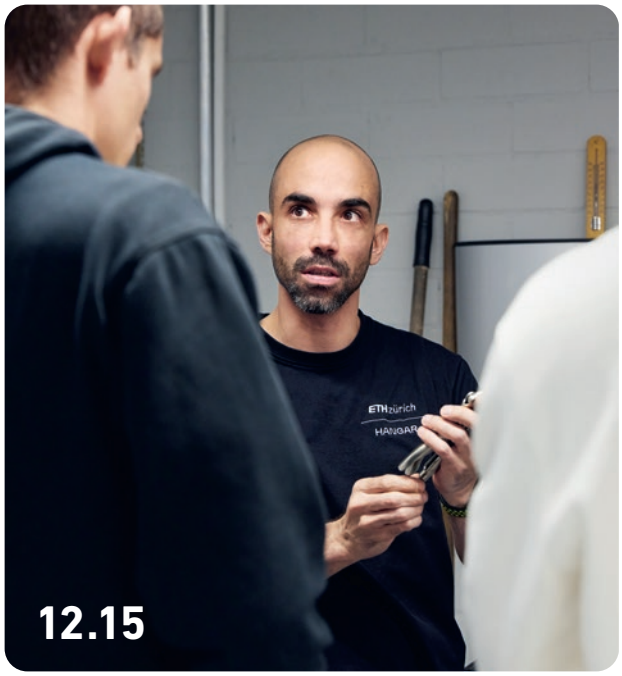
To illustrate this point, he takes us to the Feasibility Lab in Hangar 3, where students collaborate closely with industrial partners such as VAT, V-Zug, Bossard and Bühler. "We provide companies with an unbiased perspective that is open to all technologies," says Kai von Petersdorff-Campen, Co-Lead of the Feasibility Lab. "We get particularly excited about ideas where it is not yet clear which technologies will be required. In these cases, we test various possible solutions within a short time frame and determine which ETH experts it makes sense to collaborate with for research purposes." Students from the Feasibility Lab have the opportunity of working directly with the relevant companies for a semester, allowing them to build prototypes at the ETH Hangar in just a few hours or over a couple of days. "The conditions here are perfect for product development," says Cyril. "Everything can be tested on site, enabling us to find out quickly whether the prototypes actually work."

"We provide companies with an unbiased perspective that is open to all technologies."

Just go for it

With its focus on project-based teaching, half of Hangar 3 provides space for people to chat and share ideas and the other half is where the focus projects become reality. Cellsius, for example, is currently developing a hydrogen-powered aircraft. Marius Robinson explains how a fuel cell drive is installed. "Fuel cells are very delicate," he says. "Before we could even think about installation, we needed to test and optimise all the parameters, including temperature, air pressure and humidity. Now, we are at the stage of integrating the fuel cell into the aircraft. Weight distribution is crucial to ensure that the flight behaviour remains unchanged." The goal is for the aircraft – a real Sling HW kit – to take to the skies here at Dübendorf in summer 2025, following three years of work.

As we walk past the workshops belonging to AMZ, Aris and Swissloop, we notice that some of the teams are absent. "Many of them generally work here in the evenings or at weekends," says Cyril. "They still have to keep up with



their studies." The overall atmosphere of the ETH Hangar resembles a shared living space for scientists and engineers, featuring cosy furnishings along with fridges and cooking facilities in the front area. People feel at home here, and there is no strict division between work and leisure.

Getting projects off the ground

This morning, Andrej Kern – techpool Workshop Manager – is providing initial training in the metal workshop and demonstrating how to handle tools. He aims to instruct students in how to build prototypes independently and to operate the machines correctly so as to avoid any injuries. "Over the course of the year that the majority of our students spend with us, we develop a strong relationship built on trust," says Andrej. This sense of togetherness is something they hope to extend to Hangar 2, where facilities for research and industry collaborations are currently being built. The first projects are expected to begin moving in from March 2025 onwards. It's definitely an exciting place to be! Over the next few years, they plan to expand the airfield site to include office buildings for companies wanting to be close to the world of research. Although the poles marking out the future buildings may not be clearly visible outside in the fog, inside, the ideas for future collaborations are ready for take-off.

12.15 Andrej Kern teaches students how to use tools and operate machines, ensuring newcomers can learn to build prototypes safely and avoid injuries.

13.00 Indian, Thai or a burger? At Dübendorf airfield, food trucks cater for the hungry ETH students and members.

Author
Walter Schmid

Photos
Marco Rosasco

How is ETH Net Zero progressing?

What have you always wanted to know about the world of ETH?
Please send your questions to life@hk.ethz.ch

The Executive Board launched the "ETH Net Zero" programme 2024–2030 in March. What is happening and what do we need to keep in mind?

Claudia Zingerli and Sebastian Kahlert:
The social framework conditions for net zero are in place – from the Paris Agreement to the Swiss Federal Administration climate package and the Climate and Innovation Act. Our "ETH Net Zero" programme, launched by the Executive Board in March, aims to keep us on track too. As we come to the end of the year, we would like to share the following points with you.

1.
In order to decarbonise the university's operations and promote resource-friendly practices, the ETH Net Zero programme is designed to enable well-founded decisions to be made quickly. The programme steering committee – comprising members from all Executive Board domains – is working closely with those in research and teaching as well as external partners. Implementation is already under way for eight out of nine transformative projects.

2.
Determining the effects and costs of avoiding, reducing and neutralising greenhouse gas emissions is only possible with scientific methods and transparent reporting. The supply chains alone for the goods that allow research and teaching to take place at ETH currently account for an operational footprint of around five tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per ETH member.

3.
To enable us – and ETH as an institution – to exercise our responsibility more effectively, the programme's aim is to spur the intelligent and well-informed ETH community into action. To this end, there will be interactive events and campaigns as well as presentations in departments and (inter)national networks. Alongside sharing information and raising awareness, the programme aims to show people how to get involved – at an individual level or by joining task forces.

One of the next milestones will be the second ETH Net Zero Day in May 2025, at which point the current greenhouse gas data will be analysed again and we will see how our measures are performing in terms of the framework conditions for net zero. As we navigate towards a greater level of commitment in ETH's climate protection efforts, it promises to be an exciting and educational journey. Stay tuned and ready to steer!

Illustration
Karin Hauser

Claudia Zingerli
Head of ETH Sustainability

Sebastian Kahlert
ETH Sustainability employee and manager of the ETH Net Zero programme

Do we need to use the cc function in our emails?

For

Andrea Germann
Event Management

It's happened again. After a long weekend, my email inbox is overflowing with dozens of new messages, and I suspect it will take at least half the morning to get through them. When, on closer inspection, I discover that many of the emails are just cc-ing me and that a significant number of them are endless reply-to-all loops, I can barely suppress a sigh.

So it must surely be time to get rid of the cc function (which comes from the "carbon copies" of pre-digital times), right?

Wrong! It's not the cc function itself that is clogging up our inboxes. It's people not knowing how to use it properly. But we need to take a step back first. If there is something I need to share, the first thing I do is decide on the right form of communication. Is an email actually the best way to communicate the information? Would a call, chat message or face-to-face meeting not be more effective? Once I have confirmed that email is the right form of communication, we come to the next step: deciding who to send it to.

This may sound straightforward, but it requires careful consideration. First, I consider who is actually impacted by the information I need to share. Next, I determine who will answer my question or carry out the task at hand – these individuals are placed in the To field. I then deliberately use the cc function for anyone who I think might find the content of the email relevant or at least good to know about. However, I don't expect any response or action from those cc'd. Instead, I use this function to share information efficiently and to show appreciation. I'm essentially saying, "Hi, I want you to be aware of this matter; it's important to me!".

In these times of flexible working when I can't just speak to my colleagues face-to-face, the deliberate use of the cc function in emails has become increasingly important. However, I would prefer to eliminate the practice of indiscriminately copying in people from all levels of the hierarchy – above me, below me, at the same level as me – as it only adds to the confusion.

We need to take a moment to pause and consider our goals: what we want to achieve and who we want to reach. By carefully selecting our content and intended audience before hitting "Send", we can ensure better results. This approach works wonders – and our inboxes will thank us for it.

"It's not the cc function itself that is clogging up our inboxes. It's people not knowing how to use it properly."

The cc function in emails is widely used but often misused. Like any technology, it is not inherently to blame; rather, it just depends on how we choose to use it. Utilising the cc field is straightforward and convenient. It allows us to keep others informed about the emails we send, while also giving us a sense of control when we ask people to cc us.

The cc function is a wonderful thing in theory – like communism and vegan cheese. But in practice it often reveals a lack of self-confidence or an unthinking need to exert control. None of us want to admit to these tendencies, but they are clearly evident in people's emailing habits.

There are of course situations where it is appropriate or even sensible to cc one or more people. Just as it is possible for a meeting involving more than four people and lasting more than 15 minutes to produce tangible results. However, these are exceptions that prove the rule. Generally speaking, neither of these scenarios is true.

We are all sometimes guilty of well-intentioned inefficiency, often becoming victims of our own actions without considering the consequences. And too often we fail to think about the consequences of our actions. Emails waste a lot of our time and are the number one productivity killer in our daily work. According to a study by Adobe, people spend an average of five hours per day reading emails (2019 Adobe E-Mail Usage Study). One fact contributing to this issue is the use of cc in emails.

It's not merely a quantitative issue – there is an even more serious qualitative risk in terms of mental overload. Every cc email that we read or send adds to our mental load – the psychological strain of organising our daily tasks and work activities.

"Every cc email that we read or send adds to our mental load."

So the next time we consider cc-ing someone or asking them to cc us, it's worth taking a moment to ask ourselves whether it makes sense and is truly necessary. If we're unsure, it's better to avoid using cc altogether and to have more confidence in ourselves and our colleagues.

Against

Marius von Holleben-Peiser
Campus Services

What do you think?
Join the discussion now at:
ethz.ch/cc-function

Illustrations
Grafilu

“What was the highlight of your 2024?”

Daniel Bociat (24)
Master's degree student at D-INFK

“My girlfriend and I took a trip to Bali. It was the first time that either of us had been to that part of Asia, and it was really enriching to experience a different culture.”

“My highlight was starting my MAS programme in Management Technology and Economics at ETH. I am grateful to my employer for supporting this opportunity for continuing education and training. I had really been looking forward to it and I think the programme is great at ETH.”

Samba (9)
Study support assistant for owner Jarno Meul (student on a semester abroad)

Elizabeth Thomas (40)
MAS student at D-MTEC

Recorded by
Noe Lüthi

Photos
Anouk Schuler

“Last week I completed my leadership and management specialist training. After working towards this goal for two years, I’m thrilled to have achieved it. Despite facing some staff shortages at work, our team has come together remarkably well. Seeing how it worked out was really cool.”

Nadine Elmer (30), left
Deputy group leader at Campus Info Hönggerberg

“2024 was the year in which I started my apprenticeship at Campus Info. I play floorball and am doing a commercial sports apprenticeship. The first two years were focused solely on studying, but this year marks the first time that I’m working. Everyone has been very welcoming, and I feel fully involved in all activities, which is great.”

Lena Fleischlin (19), right
Commercial sports apprenticeship participant at Campus Info Hönggerberg

“It’s great to be working here at ETH while I am on a one-year sabbatical from MIT. I have lots of freedom and the opportunity to work on interesting topics in mathematics. I have had a wonderful time so far in Switzerland, with good food and some great hiking.”

Tom Mrowka (63)
Senior Fellow at D-MATH, Mathematics Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

“One of the best moments for me was when my colleague’s yoga course resumed, and the next day I felt freer and more balanced than I had in a long time.”

Philippe Wiederkehr (31)
Campus barista at Miró Coffee and D-BAUG alumnus

Melting away

Since 1913, the Konkordia precipitation collector has been recording the annual rainfall on the Aletsch Glacier at an altitude of 2,880 metres. In the past, researchers had to trek through the harsh icy conditions equipped with poles and hats, pickaxes and ropes to get their data. Today, ETH researchers higher up at the Jungfraujoch research station not only have modern measuring methods such as laser or radar measurements, but also enjoy a reliable power supply, wireless internet, comfortable accommodation and an unobstructed view of the glacier. Depending on the climate scenario, the Konkordiaplatz in the centre of the image – where the ice currently reaches a height of 800 metres – could be ice-free by the end of this century.

Photo
ETH Library Zurich, Image Archive