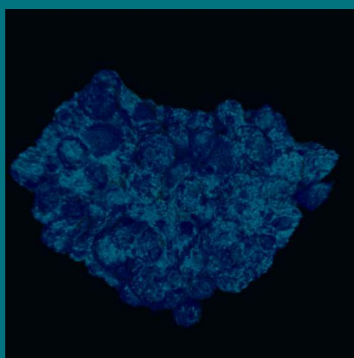
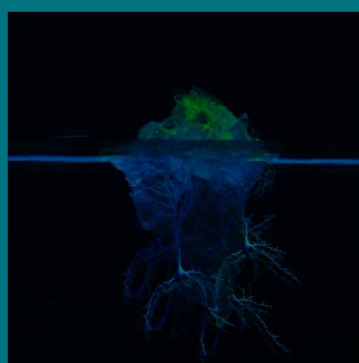


School of Life Sciences
EVALUATION
Expert Report
2024

Date of review
3rd to 7th March 2024



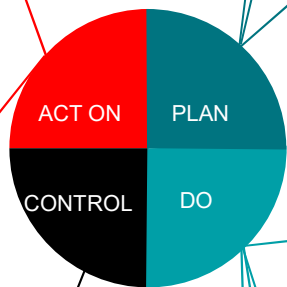
Timeline

June 2027
The SV Dean will present the implemented enhancements to the ETH Board.

January 2025
The executive summary was published on the dedicated webpages*.

* The expert report contains confidential information and cannot be anonymised. For transparency reasons, the executive summary is available on the dedicated webpages.

September 2024
The ETH Board was provided with the expert report, SV and EPFL Management Board statements.



September 2022
The ETH Board published the evaluation plan for ETHZ and EPFL.

May 2023
After consultation with SV, the EPFL Management Board established the terms of reference (TOR).

June 2023
The EPFL Management Board appointed the expert Committee.

January 2024
The expert Committee received the self-assessment report (SAR).

March 2024
The 3.5 days visit was followed by a debriefing with the EPFL Management Board and the participants.

July 2024
The SV Direction commented the report et proposed an action plan.

August 2024
After the consultation with the EPFL Deans, the EPFL Management Board commented the report and took appropriate measures.

Evaluation Committee

Fiona M. Watt (chair), EMBO Director, group leader EMBL Heidelberg

Andrea Alimonti, Director of Institute of Oncology Research, Head of Molecular Oncology, Institute of Oncology Research, Università della Svizzera italiana

Timothy Behrens, Deputy Director, Centre for Functional MRI of the Brain, University of Oxford

Pascale Cossart, Emeritus Professor “de Classe Exceptionnelle”, Institut Pasteur, Paris

Dennis E. Discher, Director of NCI-Physical Sciences Oncology Center/Project, and Professor of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Barry Everitt, Emeritus Professor of Behavioural Neuroscience, University of Cambridge

Robert Fluhr, Head, Life Sciences Core Facilities; group leader, Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Weizmann Institute

André Mercanzini, Director, Aleva Neurotherapeutics SA EPFL Innovation Park

Craig Roy, Director of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBS), Yale University

Executive summary

We are most grateful to the School of Life Sciences (SV) for facilitating the work of the Evaluation committee. Extensive documentation was provided in advance of the visit and additional material was made available while we were on-site. We were most impressed by the openness of the Dean, the EPFL “Direction” and individuals and teams at all levels. We thank the administrative staff for all their hard work and support.

We would like to acknowledge the major contribution that the Dean is making to EPFL's success. He was widely praised for his openness and approachability, particularly amongst the young staff. His leadership style showed a great interest in all aspects of SV and EPFL and in improving the way things work. His international background and perspective are a considerable strength.

While SV is the youngest of the large EPFL schools, having been founded in 2003, there can be no doubt that it amply fulfils the three missions of EPFL in education, research and innovation. The standards of activity in all three areas are very high.

SV has made considerable efforts to comply with the recommendations of the 2016 Evaluation.

The current Evaluation committee have made a number of observations and recommendations that we hope will foster the ongoing success of SV and EPFL more broadly.

Selected recommendations

- Carry out an evaluation of all biological research across EPFL
- An undergraduate biology course in the first or second year should be a requirement across EPFL
- An HR officer should be based in the School
- Individual meetings with the PI and his/her lab members before the student is hired should be implemented. Ideally there should be a period where students have a chance to discover what it is like in different labs
- The existing four PhD programmes should be brought into one programme, while retaining the community feel of different research topics
- A senior academic should be appointed as an advocate for all PhD students
- A boot-camp should be introduced for all PhD students in their first year
- SV should consider changing IBI from an Institute to a transversal theme or reconfiguring it in some other form that has a particular focus for hiring and excellence, such as synthetic biology
- SV should consider renaming GHI
- Intervention at the highest level - EPFL President – is required to facilitate access to clinical samples
- Funding for Catalyze4Life should be increased
- Tech Transfer approaches to life science patents between EPFL and ETH should be compared
- Non-alumni SV postdocs should have access to professional development and other programmes enjoyed currently only by EPFL alumni
- An external expert committee should be set up to make recommendations to the Dean on how to ensure the future of IT provision

EXTRAIT DU PROCÈS-VERBAL

**Séance du Conseil des EPF
des 4 et 5 décembre 2024****Point 18****Décision:****Evaluation de la faculté des Sciences de la Vie (SV) de l'EPFL**

Sur proposition de son président, le Conseil des EPF **décide ce qui suit:**

1. Le Conseil des EPF prend connaissance de l'évaluation du département des Sciences de la Vie de l'EPFL (rapport des experts, réponse de la faculté SV et prise de position de la direction de l'EPFL).
2. Communication au président de l'EPFL.

Certifié conforme:

Le président du Conseil des EPF

La rédactrice du procès-verbal du Conseil des EPF

Michael O. Hengartner

Barbara Schar

