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Why do we need a Compliance Guide?

ETH Zurich, one of the world’s leading universities, is held in high esteem for its research and teaching both in Switzerland and abroad. This reputation is based not only on the excellent results of its scientists but also on the ethical values that shape the university’s daily activities.

At ETH Zurich, we are proud to promote a culture of responsibility and autonomy. However, this culture can only thrive if all members comply with the statutory requirements and strictly adhere to internal directives. In view of a responsible conduct, all ETH members, and particularly those in leading positions, are required to integrate the general conditions and internal directives into the work process.

The following Compliance Guide is designed to serve as an orientation tool. Providing a short overview of the most important areas of governance that need to be observed, it focuses on those specific topics where non-compliance might result in a massive damage to ETH’s reputation. To facilitate implementation, each point is supplemented with further information and contact persons available for consultation.

By maintaining good practice in the areas mentioned, all members will help ensure that ETH Zurich’s integrity is secured and responsible conduct is strengthened on all levels.

Lino Guzzella
President

Sarah Springman
Rector

Detlef Günther
Vice President Research and Corporate Relations

Robert Perich
Vice President Finance and Controlling

Ulrich Weidmann
Vice President Human Resources and Infrastructure
Integrity and ethics in research

Basic principles
Besides scientific competence, integrity among researchers is the most important factor for sustainable success in science. ETH Zurich therefore places great value on ensuring that its members follow good scientific practice. Action can be taken against any breach of guidelines for integrity in research.

Integrity in research covers aspects such as the following:
- In the research context, the project manager plays an active role in guiding and monitoring junior scientists. In particular, he or she is responsible for making sure that everyone involved in the project is aware of the research integrity guidelines.
- Junior scientists are given appropriate guidance.
- Primary data is carefully archived.
- Research results will neither be artificially fabricated for use in scientific texts or charts, nor concealed for no reason nor changed nor displayed in a misleading way.
- Intellectual property belonging to third parties is to be correctly used and acknowledged in scientific publications. Only those persons who fulfill the relevant requirements to authorship will be named as authors of scientific publications. It is important that all these persons are named, with the order of names following the conventions applicable to each specific field.
- The trusted intermediary is the point of contact for plagiarism and other breaches of guidelines of integrity and research.
- Assessments and evaluations must be carried out with the objectivity and confidentiality expected as part of the peer-review process.

For questions arising on good scientific practice or suspected scientific misconduct, ETH Zurich has designated a confidant who is available for all members of the university to contact.

Responsibilities
First and foremost, each researcher at ETH Zurich is responsible for their own conduct and for following the integrity guidelines. However, within the scope of their leadership duties, it is the project and research group heads and the professors in particular, who bear the final responsibility.

Contact
Prof. em. Bernhard Plattner
Prof. Dr. Rainer Schulin
Trusted intermediary at ETH Zurich
confidant@ethz.ch

Further information
Website with information on the subject of research ethics

Information about plagiarism
http://www.ethz.ch/faculty/exams/plagiarism/index_EN
Advice for day-to-day business

- Ensure that your staff are aware of the research integrity guidelines and citation etiquette and that these guidelines are adhered to in your daily research activities and applied in scientific publications.

- Make sure that supervisory duties are not seriously neglected and that actions not corresponding to guidelines for research integrity do not remain undisclosed.

Legal basis

Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 414 →

Procedure to address allegations of research misconduct at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 415 →

Code of Conduct for Scientific Cooperation
RSETHZ 416 →

Rector’s directive on original scientific work
Teaching

Basic principles

ETH Zurich imparts high levels of disciplinary expertise and scientific skills to its students. It prepares them to assume responsibility and play a constructive role as critical members of society.

Designing and holding lectures
- The qualification profile for the degree programme describes the disciplinary and metadisciplinary skills students will acquire. The courses contribute to the qualification profile for the degree programme and build upon previous curricular knowledge with regard to content and skills.
- Learning objectives are clearly set out, transparent, ambitious and binding. The content and design of lectures, exercises, projects, practicals, examinations and other types of performance assessment are geared towards the learning objectives.
- Credits reflect the actual, average student workload. The extent of the anticipated workload is made transparent.
- Authors sign a declaration of originality for every semester, Bachelor's or Master's thesis they write at ETH Zurich. Responsibility for complying with this requirement lies with the lecturers supervising the thesis in question. Lecturers may also ask for a declaration of originality for other written work.
- If material from other authors is used in courses, the source must be cited on it.
- When conducting excursions, field courses and similar events, special attention must be given to the issues of safety and security, insurance and responsibility. The Safety, Security, Health and Environment (SSHE) staff unit offers assistance in this area.

Performance assessments
- Examination tasks serve to verify that students have acquired the skills set out in the learning objectives. They are appropriate to the course content and methodologically reliable.
- Scoring proceeds independently of the examiner and everyone is subject to the same transparent respectively comprehensibly conditions. The grading scale is determined in such a way that a student's grade is not dependent on the achievements of other students.
- Exam corrections contain information relevant to the individual student's performance. Examination review allows students to use this information for further learning.
- If unethical behaviour in performance assessments or plagiarism is detected, the Rector and the responsible Prorector must be informed immediately. Both are considered to be breaches of disciplinary guidelines and will lead to action being taken by the Rector.
- Written performance assessments and protocols of oral performance assessments must be stored in a place that is not accessible to unauthorised persons and must be archived in accordance with legal requirements.

Teaching evaluation
ETH Zurich maintains and develops the outstanding quality of its teaching through centrally managed quality and evaluation instruments requirements. All departments are regularly subject to peer review, which includes an assessment of teaching quality. Student evaluations comprise an important aspect of this comprehensive teaching assessment system.

Responsibilities
Lecturers' primary obligation is to fulfil their teaching duties and responsibilities in accordance with the relevant formal and legal requirements. In connection with their management duties, the Directors of Studies are responsible, among other things, for the proper implementation of the study regulations.
Advice for day-to-day business

- Student data: Do not pass on student data to third parties. Do not keep lists of grades on laptops or external storage devices. Do not save documents containing names or registration numbers of students (e.g. lists of exercises) online without password protection. Please use the storage facilities of the academic applications for such purposes.

- Admissions: Do not give anyone assurances that they will be admitted to a course of studies before the official decision on admission has been made. This applies to admissions at all levels (Bachelor’s, Master’s, doctoral programmes and further academic training courses).

- Examination sheets: At the end of written examinations, please ensure that all students submit all examination sheets in an orderly fashion and that the submission and receipt of these documents are checked. Students can no longer submit examination sheets once they have left the room.

- Announcement of grades: Informal announcements of grades, e.g. directly after an oral examination, are not permitted. Grades are always issued and notified to the students by the department/the Study Administration Office.

Contact

Details of the responsible contact persons/staff units including the Prorectors can be found in the Rector’s section of the website

Further information

Guidelines for lecturers

Quality criteria for teaching

Legal basis

Ordinance on Course Units and Performance Assessments at ETH Zurich
http://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20121393/index.html →

ETH Zurich Disciplinary Code
http://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20042642/index.html →

Directive on working scientifically and the declaration of originality

Directive on viewing and transferring performance assessment records (viewing of performance assessment records)

Directive on teaching evaluation by students at ETH Zurich
https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/common/docs/weisungssammlung/files-en/teaching-evaluation.pdf →
Employment

Basic principles

Employment at ETH Zurich is governed by federal personnel law and is considered public employment. Employment at ETH Zurich is only possible under a written employment contract signed by the designated Human Resources representative and the employee. Any extension, change or termination of the contract must be made in writing in order to be valid and will only be implemented by Human Resources representative and the employee. Human Resources have also been assigned responsibility by the Executive Board for implementing the university’s salary policy.

In principle, the contract is permanent unless a termination date is explicitly specified, for instance in the case of projects. Temporary contracts may be issued more than once for:

- Assistant professors for a maximum period of eight years.
- Assistants, senior assistants and other employees with a similar function for a maximum period of six years. In the event of an assistant role becoming a senior assistant role, the years as an assistant will not be counted.
- Employees in teaching and research projects and persons in other projects who are financed by third party resources for a maximum period of nine years.
- Other employees (i.e. technical or administrative staff) for a maximum period of five years.

Temporary contracts end without the need for termination when the length specified in the contract has been completed. The maximum length of limited employment as defined by the law must not be exceeded.

Career development meetings are to be held by superiors with their subordinates at an early stage.

Applications for temporary and permanent employment contracts and extensions are to be sent to the designated Human Resources manager via HR Workflow. Consideration must be given to ETH Zurich’s Financial Regulations and Organisation Ordinance.

Specificities of assistant professorships
Assistant professors are appointed for four years pursuant to the Guidelines for the Assistant Professor System at ETH Zurich. A one-off extension of a further maximum of four years is admissible.

Specificities of scientific staff
A temporary contract can only be changed to a permanent contract by the Executive Board at the request of the department. There is no right to a permanent contract.

Specificities of doctoral students
The duties and remuneration of scientific staff are regulated in the Ordinance for Scientific Personnel. Supervisors are required to make their best efforts to enable junior scientists to develop into independent researchers. In the case of a difference of opinion or conflict, the arbitration process specified in the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies is to be observed.

Specificities of technical and administrative staff
Exceeding the maximum length of temporary employment automatically leads to a permanent contract. ETH Zurich observes the employment law-based principle that temporary employment contracts may not be used as a way of circumventing the employee’s protection against unlawful dismissal. It therefore follows the policy of employing technical and administrative staff who perform permanent tasks in the central bodies and academic departments on a permanent basis.

Specificities of foreign citizens
To employ foreign citizens, a permit may have to be obtained from the cantonal immigration and labour market authorities, depending on the person’s nationality.
Principles of leadership and conduct

ETH Zurich follows a progressive, fair employment policy. Its leadership principles demonstrate its commitment to a leadership culture that is open and based on dialogue.

**Leadership principles**
- Be conscious of the responsibilities of your leadership role
- Lead by objectives and focus on development
- Communicate openly and clearly
- Actively support personal development
- Promote team spirit
- Enable change

ETH Zurich places central importance treating others with respect. It does not tolerate any form of sexual harassment, discrimination, threats or any other inappropriate conduct.

When conflicts or problems occur, staff may seek advice from human resources and the ombudspersons of ETH Zurich.

**Outside activities**
Pursuant to the Personnel Ordinance for the ETH Domain, performing outside activities requires permission when
- conflict with the interests of ETH or interference with the fulfilment of duties may arise.
- the reputation of ETH could be endangered.
- the employee requires the use of ETH infrastructure.
- the employee wishes to join a board of directors.

Rules governing outside activities conducted by professors are listed in guidelines set by the Executive Board.

**Employing relatives and partners**
Employees and professors who are married to each other or who live in a partnership are to be employed in such a way that neither is an immediate superior or subordinate to the other. The same applies to first- and second-degree blood relatives and first-degree relatives by marriage.
Responsibilities

Hiring staff, supervising junior scientists and regulating outside activities all belong to a professor’s basic scope of responsibility. You are required to ensure that the relevant employment law regulations and ETH Zurich’s leadership principles are adhered to. If a situation is unclear, involve Human Resources at an early stage.

Contact

You will find a designated contact person from Human Resources at https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/organisation/departments/human-resources.html →

Ombudspersons of ETH Zurich
The ombudspersons also act as a reporting body for information from ETH Zurich employees regarding legal and ethical misconduct.

Whistleblowing guidance of RSETHZ
https://www.ethz.ch/services/de/service/rechtliches/whistleblowing.html

Office of Equal Opportunities
http://www.equal.ethz.ch →

Further information

Human Resources homepage
www.hr.ethz.ch →

Further education opportunities offered by Human Resources

Information on respectful conduct at ETH Zurich
www.respekt.ethz.ch →

Legal basis

Federal Personnel Act
SR 172.220.1 →

ETH Law
SR 414.110 →

Personnel Ordinance for the ETH Domain [PVO-ETH]
RSETHZ 121.11 →

Guidelines concerning Outside Activities of ETH Zurich Professors
RSETHZ 501.2 →

Ordinance for Scientific Personnel at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 516.1 →

Faculty Ordinance ETH
RSETHZ 501 →

Guidelines for the Assistant Professor System at ETH Zurich as issued by the President
RSETHZ 510.20 →

President’s Directives concerning Sabbaticals for Professors of ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 510.10 →

Directives on reports by members of ETH Zurich regarding legal and ethical misconduct
RSETHZ 130.1 →

Guidelines for employing spouses, partners and relatives at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 121.14 →
Advice for day-to-day business

- Hold an appraisal based on ETH Zurich principles with each employee at least once a year. Set your staff clear objectives and discuss the professional development.

- Follow best practice advice when supervising dissertation work: selection tools, individual meetings, progress reports and scientific communication.

- Make use of the wide range of further education opportunities that are regularly offered by Human Resources. Enable your staff to make use of these offers, too.

- In the event of any conflict with staff, contact Human Resources at an early stage.

- For future staff from non-EU states: Be aware that entry into the country and employment require valid official documents. Academic guests are to be notified to the Rectorate and Human Resources.

- When applicants are equally qualified for a position, please apply the ETH Zurich Gender Policy.

- Avoid conflict of interests between ETH Zurich and your private interests.

- You and your staff are only allowed to accept gifts that are considered standard in Switzerland. Gifts and invitations must not affect your independence, objectivity and freedom of action.
Finance

Basic principles

All funds or assets provided to ETH Zurich become the property of ETH Zurich irrespective of their origin (financial contribution of the federal government or third-party sources).

The individual organisational entities and their respective functionaries manage the resources entrusted to them within the framework of the applicable regulations and ordinances on an independent and entrepreneurial basis. In return, they are accountable for such financial resources.

ETH Zurich budget officers – which include heads of teaching and research plus full, associate and assistant professors, as well as heads of departments and institutes – are responsible for all funds allocated to their areas, whatever the source. To ensure the smooth handling of business and financial matters, they may appoint a deputy (in addition to any fund holders and administrators). The deputy has the same rights as the budget officer. The appointment of a deputy is compulsory in the event of absences lasting longer than three months. Deputisation is the most extensive form of delegation of financial competencies.

The budget officer is responsible for the inventoried assets in his or her area of responsibility and informs the responsible controller in the event of discrepancies.

Budget officer approval limits are based on the spending authorities defined in the Financial Regulations. The following thresholds relating to professorships must be observed for all financial obligations towards third parties (for example, contracts, orders and invoices) and also for internal fund allocations and transactions:

- **Up to CHF 50 000:** The budget officer is the sole signatory for his or her area of responsibility.

- **CHF 50 000 to 250 000:** The budget officer responsible for the transaction must sign jointly with a second budget officer from the department.

- **CHF 250 000 to 500 000:** The budget officer responsible for the transaction must sign jointly with the department head. If the department head is the budget officer responsible for the transaction, he or she must sign jointly with his or her deputy.

- **For transactions and internal funds allocations in excess of CHF 500 000,** approval must be obtained from the Executive Board in advance.

Special rules regarding signatory powers apply for non-departmental teaching and research facilities and Executive Board members. Further directives governing signatory authorities are found in Art. 69, Art. 75 and in Appendix 1 of the Financial Regulations. The responsibilities set out in Art. 26 of the Financial Regulations apply to the acceptance of donations.

Advice for day-to-day business

- Refer to the website of the Finance and Controlling Department and the Financial Regulations.

- You may delegate administrative management and day-to-day control to an administrative officer of your area of responsibility. You will, however, remain fully responsible in any case for the proper use of funds.
Responsibilities

Tasks, competencies and responsibilities in the area of Finance and Controlling are defined in the Financial Regulations.

Contact

You will find the client advisor of the Accounting Department responsible for your area on https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/organisation/departments/educational-development-and-technology.html

Further Information

Website of Finance and Controlling
www.fc.ethz.ch

Access to the ETH information and support portal «ETHIS»
http://ethis.ethz.ch

Legal basis

Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 245

Code of Conduct of ETH Zurich for handling donations
RSETHZ 245.9

– Use ETHIS to view and access information, digitised invoices and contracts (e-dossier funds). ETHIS enables you also to process business transactions electronically.

– The Accounting Department supports the researchers in the financial reporting of EU, SNF and KTI projects.
Basic principles

ETH Zurich’s procurement policy defines the principles, guidelines and requirements to be observed by both internal procurement personnel and suppliers. In accordance with this policy, procurement must be needs-based, sustainable, economic and coordinated and performed with integrity.

Purchases of movable goods, services and construction services constitute public procurement transactions and are subject to the laws and ordinances governing ETH Zurich. The duties, competences and responsibilities in the procurement process at ETH Zurich are defined in the Financial Regulations.

The Department Real Estate, Facility Management, ETH Library, IT Services, Human Resources as well as Financial Services are the procurement offices of ETH Zurich. They either allocate the goods and services assigned to them (in accordance with Appendix 2 to the Financial Regulations), order them on request or provide information on the optimal ordering process. For example, office and laboratory equipment, information and communications technology (ICT), and cleaning, construction, printing, dispatch and postal services can be ordered via procurement offices.

If the required goods and services cannot be obtained from internal procurement offices, they may be purchased from external suppliers. Orders with a value of more than CHF 10,000 (incl. VAT) must be made in writing and handled in accordance with the responsible procurement office’s designated process. Three quotations must be obtained for all goods orders with a value of more than CHF 50,000 (excl. VAT) and all orders of services worth more than CHF 150,000 (excl. VAT). Where orders with a value of more than CHF 230,000 (excl. VAT) are planned, contact must be made with the responsible procurement office at an early stage in order to determine the type of tender process to be used.
Advice for day-to-day business

- Contact the procurement offices at an early stage in the requirements planning/procurement process to benefit from favourable conditions.

- For the tender process, you should allow a period of at least three months between drafting the order scope and placing the order.

- Define technical specifications on the basis of your own minimum technical requirements rather than the manufacturer’s product specifications.

- Wherever possible, always try to obtain several tenders and negotiate terms for all purchases, including services and business expenses.

- Use the ETHIS procurement request for external purchases. By doing so, you can ensure compliance with spending authority provisions, archiving of the purchase documents and correct processing of your order.

- Obtain software products via the IT shop of IT Services and inform yourself before the procurement / use of software on the applicable terms of use.

- Please remember that only the Portfolio Management in the Real Estate infrastructure division is authorised to conclude rental agreements for space.

- Purchases resulting from research projects are subject to public procurement law and/or the Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich if the service in question primarily constitutes a supply of goods (e.g. scientific equipment) or the provision of construction or other services (e.g. analysis).

- Please observe the applicable export regulations when procuring, using and exporting goods. You should ensure, for example, that regulations on the use of source codes are implemented at your institute.

- Where prototypes or new types of services are being developed by an industrial partner, purchases may be made (subject to approval from the procurement office in charge) directly from the industrial partner.
Rules on impartiality and recusal

Purchases by ETH Zurich may be of interest to the public irrespective of the sum of money involved. That is why ETH Zurich expects its budget officers and other employees involved in the procurement process to sign a declaration of impartiality.

If an especially close relationship or conflict of interest with a provider gives rise to an apparent lack of impartiality, you as an employee are required to recuse yourself. For this reason, persons involved in procurement projects, i.e. budget officers and the staff of the procurement offices, must comply with the following principles:

– Immediately notify, in writing, your superior and the Purchasing Coordination or the Legal Services Office if a quotation is received in a procurement project from a provider to which you have an especially close relationship. Especially close relationships include, for example, close current or former personal business ties with natural or legal persons (e.g. secondary employment, shareholding, employment relationships), partnership (marriage, de facto marriage), relationship or relationship by marriage, economic or other dependency.

– When evaluating quotations received in connection with a procurement project, you must act exclusively in the interests of ETH Zurich.

– Treat all information, documents and results connected with a procurement project in confidence before, during and after the tender process. This means that this data must not be made available to unauthorized third parties in any way whatsoever.

– You must not have any contact before or during the procurement project with potential providers regarding the purchase in question which could jeopardise the equal treatment of all providers.

– As a person involved in an ongoing procurement process, you must turn down all gifts, invitations or minor favours customary in society offered to you by existing or potential providers.

Responsibilities

ETH Zurich budget officers are required to know the procurement principles and the rules on impartiality and recusal and put them into practice in their area of responsibility.

Before tender projects with a value of more than CHF 230 000, professors and involved employees must sign a declaration of impartiality in relation to the project.

All other budget officers and the procurement office employees involved in procurement projects must sign this declaration every three years independently of any specific project and irrespective of the sum of money involved.

Contact

André Baumgartner
Finance and Controlling
Financial Services Department, Purchasing Coordination
Tel. 044 632 23 46
andre.baumgartner@fc.ethz.ch

Other responsible procurement offices for goods and services
Further information

Procurement policy and procurement at ETH Zurich
https://www.ethz.ch/services/de/finanzen-und-controlling/beschaffung.html

IT Shop
https://idesnx.ethz.ch/

Legal basis

Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich, Chapter 7 Procurement
RSETHZ 245

Federal Act on Public Procurement Services (BöB)
SR 172.056.1

Ordinance on Public Procurement Services (VöB)
SR 172.056.11

General Terms and Conditions for the Procurement of Goods and Services
https://rechtssammlung.sp.ethz.ch/Dokumente/131.pdf

General Terms and Conditions of ETH area for service-contract RSETHZ 131.1
https://rechtssammlung.sp.ethz.ch/Dokumente/131.1.pdf

General Terms and Conditions for the Procurement of IT Goods and Services
RSETHZ 223.1, 223.2, 223.3 and 223.4
Business expenses

Basic principles

Business expenses are to be limited to essentials. In keeping with the culture of the university, ETH Zurich expects its members to exercise restraint when it comes to expenses incurred fulfilling hosting duties or booking and going on business trips.

All expense applications submitted by ETH staff must comply with current directives. Information gaps, misconduct or inaccuracies in applications can cause reputational damage and lead to excessive work in central units.

For sabbaticals of professors, only the cost of the researcher’s own travel to and from the place of research plus expenses incurred for business duties will be refunded. Other expenses (meals, rental or private car, public transport, hosting expenses and travel and lodging costs for family members) will not be covered by ETH funds. The President may, on request, approve funding for expenses incurred for accommodation.

Responsibilities

Budget officers are required to ensure that their staff are not only aware of the Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich and the Regulations concerning Business Expenses but also that compliance is enforced.

Contact

Hans-Peter Weder
Finance and Controlling
Financial Services Department, Travel Services
Tel. 044 632 20 91
hans-peter.weder@fc.ethz.ch

Sabbaticals for professors in general:
Tanja Gsell
Office for Faculty Affairs
Tel. 044 632 55 16
tanja.gsell@sl.ethz.ch
Advice for day-to-day business

– Hosting and entertainment, aperitif receptions, internal events: Always indicate the purpose of the event and the number of participants. Take advantage of the house caterer’s offers.

– Seminar trips, excursions and business travel by car: Use the special rates from ETH’s partners for car rental.

– Rail travel: Use the SBB Ticket Shop Business (order and print tickets), your Corporate Credit Card and discounts from the Half-Fare or GA travelcard.

– Congresses, hotels for guests: Consider ETH Zurich’s contract hotels and use the rooms for seminars and congresses (including Villa Hatt and Congressi Stefano Franscini).

– Air travel: Book Economy Class on European flights. Even for long-haul flights, Business Class should only be booked in exceptional cases. Use the ETH special rates available and pay for services with your AirPlus Account. Consider alternatives to flying and make use of video conferencing.

– Further education: Encourage your administrative staff to attend courses and training sessions offered by Administrative Departments of the Vice President Finance and Controlling.

– Controlling: Be sure that applications for expense refunds are duly authorised, correctly filled in and submitted with all necessary supporting documentation. Double check applications for the reimbursements of business expenses and make sure that they haven’t been paid through the Corporate Credit Card. As budget officer, draw up an overview of the business expenses and official trips on a yearly basis.

Further information

Information on travel and business expenses

Events or seminars in Villa Hatt

Legal basis

Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich, Section 8
RSETHZ 245 →

ETH Zurich Regulations concerning Business Expenses
RSETHZ 245.3 →

Directives concerning Sabbaticals for Professors of ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 510.10 →
Safety, security, health and environment

Basic principles

ETH Zurich promotes an exemplary safety and security culture that is based on honesty and responsibility towards society. An exemplary role in terms of safety, security, health and the environment (SSHE) means not only compliance with statutory requirements but also that new findings on responsible approaches to risk are applied.

At ETH Zurich, experts at SSHE give advice to all ETH members on matters related to safety, security, health and environmental protection and provide support in enforcing necessary measures. SSHE regularly holds courses and workshops to train and further educate ETH members in these areas.

SSHE offers consultation to all supervisors who have questions arising within their scope of responsibility concerning safety, security, health and the environment.

The head of SSHE also acts as ETH Zurich’s environmental officer and IT security officer. Additional officer functions (fire safety officer, hazardous goods officer, etc.) are assigned to various specialists in the SSHE team. The head of SSHE has the authority to ban entry to the university and to file for prosecution.

SSHE represents ETH Zurich in safety-, security- and environment-related discussions with the relevant authorities (police, fire brigade, cantonal and federal offices, etc.), in close cooperation with the ETH Legal Office.

Responsibilities

The head of the department is responsible for enforcing compliance with safety and security standards in the department. He or she is also accountable for the involvement of SSHE in due time.

Supervisors (professors, senior scientists, heads of the central bodies or workshop managers) must be aware of the legal provisions applicable to their work in terms of safety, security, health and the environment. They must observe the recommendations and directives of SSHE and their supervisors in order to avoid occupational accidents and workplace health hazards and provide for safety in the laboratory. They ensure that their staff are trained and that the specified measures on occupational safety and health care are enforced. The issues of safety, security, health and the environment are discussed at regular unit meetings.

Contact

Katherine Timmel
Tel. 044 632 21 69
katherine-timmel@ethz.ch

Further information

SSHE website
www.sicherheit.ethz.ch →

Information on training and further education at SSHE
www.sicherheit.ethz.ch/continuing_education →
**Legal basis**

Ordinance on Organisation at ETH Zurich  
RSETHZ 201.021 →

Rules of Procedure from the Executive Board of ETH Zurich  
RSETHZ 202.3 →

ETH Professorial Ordinance  
RSETHZ 501 →

**Advice for day-to-day business**

- Define the particular dangers within your area of responsibility and make sure you know the legal provisions that apply in the areas of safety, security, health and environment.

- Clarify whether any permits are required for your activities. Nominate a safety and security delegate in your group. Also specify a delegate for radiation protection, biosafety and laser protection if your research covers these areas.

- Note the ETH emergency telephone numbers and the numbers of the police, fire and ambulance services.

- Please study the information on the subject of evacuation on the SSHE website and make sure that your staff are also familiar with it.

- Take advantage of the SSHE further education courses and send your staff on a fire protection course.

- Heed the information in the emergency brochure «How to Play it Safe at ETH Zurich». 
IT security and data protection

Basic principles

ETH Zurich manages information and data collected from research, teaching and management in such a way that availability, confidentiality, integrity and traceability of the information is constantly maintained.

Responsibilities

All employees assume responsibility for handling information and data with sufficient care.

They are required to comply

- with the rules in the Acceptable Use Policy for Telematics Resources (BOT),
- with security recommendations issued by IT Services,
- with the rules for storing research data in the Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at ETH Zurich,
- with the Guidelines on the Protection and Handling of Personnel Data at ETH Zurich and
- with directives given by their department or sector.

Employees with a leadership role are required to ensure that their staff are aware of and comply with these recommendations and regulations.

Contact

IT Services Desk
Tel. 044 632 77 77
servicedesk@id.ethz.ch

Data protection advisor
Lic. iur. Nadine Stadelmann Munz
Legal Services Office
044 632 74 56

Further information

General security information from IT Services on the safeIT homepage
http://www.safeit.ethz.ch/index_EN →

IT Best Practice Rules
https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/associates/services/organisation/departments/informatikdienste/files/Projekte/IT-Best_Practice_Rules__2017-01-17_EN.PDF →

Legal basis

ETH Act Art. 36a and 36b
SR 414.110 →

ETH Zurich Acceptable Use Policy for Telematics Resources (BOT)
RSETHZ 203.21 →

Ordinance on the Protection of Federal Information
SR 510.411 →

ETH Zurich Classification Table
https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/associates/services/organisation/departments/informatikdienste/files/Projekte/klassifizierungstabelle.pdf →

Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 414 →

Guidelines on the Protection and Handling of Personnel Data at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 612 →

Federal Act on Data Protection (DSG)
SR 235.1 →

Ordinance on the Federal Act on Data Protection (VDSG)
SR 235.11 →
Advice for day-to-day business

- **Data storage:** Ensure that the operator of your data storage system regularly saves the data in order that data can be retrieved in the case of defect, wilful change or human error. This is guaranteed for data stored in the central storage system of the IT Services. It is advisable to sporadically check whether old data can be recovered.

- **Classification:** Classify your research data, personnel data (e.g. locally managed personnel documents) and documents at the moment they are created and ensure that they are processed, transferred and stored in compliance with federal classification instructions. For the correct procedure please contact the Information Security Officer (ISO) of your department. [https://itsecurity.ethz.ch/en/#/contact](https://itsecurity.ethz.ch/en/#/contact).

- **Storage of data:** Confidential data stored on data storage systems within and outside ETH and on removable media must be encrypted. You alone must have exclusive access to the encrypting code. If encryption is not possible, please keep data storage devices under lock and key.

- **Storing data externally:** It is not permitted to store sensitive data (research, personnel or finance data) in a public cloud since control over this data is no longer guaranteed.

- **Use of mobile devices:** Mobile devices (phones, notebooks, tablets, memory sticks) can be tapped or lost and are therefore not appropriate for storing classified data. When taking mobile devices off the ETH premises, you must protect the devices with a password or a PIN code. In the case of notebooks, it is advisable to encrypt the whole hard disk.

- **Authentication and passwords:** Protect all your accounts with secure passwords. Please refer to the relevant safeIT security recommendations and change your passwords from time to time for additional security to help protect your accounts against unauthorised access. Never disclose information about accounts or passwords to others. Store passwords only in encrypted form (Password Safe). Never use the same password for business and private needs.
Communications

Basic principles

As a federal university with basic financing provided by federal funds, ETH Zurich is particularly dependent on the trust and approval of society and the political arena. It is therefore essential that ETH Zurich communications are credible, understandable and transparent.

The Corporate Communications infrastructure division is responsible for internal and external communications activities related to ETH Zurich. Corporate Communications issues information to ETH members, the public, the media and the political and business worlds on the services, concerns and values of the university and ensures that ETH Zurich’s corporate identity is professional and consistent.

Members of ETH Zurich who communicate to the public act in the name of the university and in doing so contribute to shaping its image. All ETH employees are obliged to maintain professional and official confidentiality. You are permitted to convey only the extent of information that is already public knowledge. Topics and issues that could endanger the reputation of ETH Zurich are the responsibility of the Executive Board and not of the units. They must be reported to the Executive Board so that any necessary communication activities can be carried out by Corporate Communications.

Responsibilities

Members of the scientific as well as administrative departments must coordinate with Corporate Communications at an early stage when planning extensive communication activities.

Contact

Communications
Tel. 044 632 98 92
kommunikationsberatung@hk.ethz.ch

Further information

Corporate Communications website
**Advice for day-to-day business**

- Take advantage of the easy-to-use digital templates in the corporate design of ETH Zurich. Consistent application of the corporate design will ensure recognisability and continuity in all internal and external communication materials and so strengthen ETH Zurich as a brand.

- Only give public statements in the name of ETH Zurich based on your function, your institutional role or specialist expertise.

- Should you wish to approach the media, contact our Media Relations team in advance.

- If you are contacted directly by journalists:
  - Do not make any spontaneous statements on the telephone. You are not obligated to provide information immediately.
  - Ascertain the type of media and the context of the enquiry.
  - Arrange an appointment for a return call.
  - Inform our Media Relations team, who will be happy to advise you.
  - You have the «right to your own words» / «right to your own image». Always ask journalists to supply interviews, quotations and images for your approval before publication.

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**Legal basis**

Guidelines on using the ETH Zurich logo  
RSETHZ 202.4 →

ETH Zurich Social Media Guidelines  
RSETHZ 203.24 →

ETH Zurich Web Policy  
RSETHZ 203.22 →
Technology transfer / Research contracts

Basic principles

ETH Zurich encourages collaboration with third parties and is interested in enabling direct exchange with industry and thereby facilitating the transfer of research results into practice.

ETH transfer gives advice to researchers on all questions that arise from collaborations with industry and concerning the commercial exploitation of research results. ETH transfer supports scientists in concluding research agreements and licenses, applying for patents and founding an ETH spin-off company.

Contracts

Contractual agreements with a total volume of CHF 10 000 and above must be concluded in writing. Where possible, please use ETH Zurich standard contract templates.

For all research contracts, signatory powers are specified in the research contract guidelines. All research and service contracts of CHF 50 000 and above require the written approval in advance of the Vice President Research and Corporate Relations (VPFW). Contracts which will extend beyond a professor’s period of employment, due to entry into emeritus status or the end of the employment contract, must be approved by the department.

When agreeing a contract, it must be ensured that ETH Zurich’s liability is minimised and that the research results can be published in a timely manner. Services by ETH Zurich must be offered under market conditions, i.e. advantage may not be taken of subsidies to compete with third parties.

Where ETH Zurich may otherwise not be able to dispose of all the required rights to the results in a project with a third party (e.g. when students are involved), such rights must be secured by ETH Zurich by means of a written agreement.

Any sale of or award of license rights to existing intellectual property owned by ETH Zurich must be approved by the VPFW.

The use of ETH Zurich infrastructure by third parties (including spin-off companies) requires contractual agreement and compensation for ETH Zurich.

Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest arising from the award of rights to third parties or from any other preferential treatment need to be made transparent in advance and respective contracts need to be approved by the VPFW. Any membership of a board of directors or executive board must be approved by the President of ETH Zurich. Private consulting contracts must be concluded in the consultant’s own name. All benefits and risks are attributed personally to the consultant.
Advice for day-to-day business

- All research or services contracts of CHF 10 000 and above must be made in writing. For each such contract, a separate third party fund must be opened.

- When budgeting, all incurred overheads and VAT must be taken into account.

- Any questions related to research contracts with business and industry and the application of research results must be addressed to ETH transfer at an early stage.

Responsibilities

Each ETH Zurich unit (professorship) that concludes a contract with a third party in the name of ETH Zurich is fully responsible for ensuring that the interaction with the contractual partner is ethically and morally justifiable and that all obligations specified in the contract will be fulfilled (confidentiality, publication process, assurance of usage rights, obtaining approvals, legal compliance, etc.). This also applies when the contract has been approved by the VPFW.

Contact

ETH transfer
Tel. 044 632 23 82
transfer@sl.ethz.ch

Further information

ETH transfer website

Legal basis

Guidelines Concerning Contracts in the Field of Research at ETH Zurich (Research Contract Guidelines)
RSETHZ 440.31 →

Guidelines for the Financial Exploitation of Research Results at ETH Zurich
RSETHZ 440.4 →

Guidelines for the Creation of Spin-off Companies at ETH Zurich (Spin-off Guidelines)
RSETHZ 440.5 →

Guidelines issued by the ETH Board concerning stakes in companies in the ETH Domain
RSETHZ 440 →

Ordinance issued by the ETH Board concerning Intellectual Property for the ETH Domain and Investments in Companies (IGBV)
SR 414.172 →
Human subject research

Basic principles

Projects which involve living or deceased persons, human embryos and foetus, human biological material (i.e. body material from living persons) or in which health-related personal data is processed in order to gain a better understanding of human diseases or the structure and functions of the human body must be evaluated in advance by the Cantonal Ethics Commission.

Prior to such projects, trial subjects must be informed of the research objectives and declare their agreement to the use of the data or materials. In addition, researchers must comply with regulations concerning data protection, the publication of results and insurance cover.

Research projects that use persons but which do not involve research of diseases or the construction and function of the human body are evaluated by the ETH Zurich Ethics Commission.

Research projects involving anonymously obtained or anonymised data or biological material do not need to be evaluated by an ethics commission. This is also the case in projects in which anonymised health-related data is used.

Responsibilities

Project leaders are responsible for compliance with Human Research Act and internal regulations.

Contact

Dr. Raffael Iturrizaga
Office of Research
Tel. 044 632 23 54
raffael.iturrizaga@sl.ethz.ch

Further information

Website of the Cantonal Ethics Commission
www.cke.zh.ch/

Website of the Ethics Commission of ETH Zurich
https://www.ethz.ch/de/die-eth-zuerich/organisation/gremien-gruppen-kommissionen/ethikkommission.html

Legal basis

Federal Act on Research Involving Human Beings (HFG) SR 810.30

Ordinance on Clinical Trials in Human Research (KlinV) SR 810.305

Ordinance on Research in Human Subjects with the Exception of Clinical Trials SR 810.301

Regulations for Human Subject Research from the ETH Zurich Ethics Commission RSETHZ 413
Advice for day-to-day business

- In case of doubt about your ethics applications, in particular when submitting an application for the first time, please contact the head office of the ETH Ethics Commission first. This helps to avoid rejections, unnecessary applications, and additional review work after submission.

- Please remember you must not start your project until you have received approval from the Ethics Commission, so make sure you allow enough time in your research plan for the ethics application to be submitted (processing time is at least three to four weeks).

- If you order biological materials or person-related data from commercial suppliers, these must have been collected in compliance with statutory regulations under Swiss law and ETH Zurich’s current guidelines. If the supplier is based abroad, a contract must be drawn up to ensure that local laws ensure compliance with these regulations. If this is not guaranteed, adherence to these regulations must be contractually sealed. In some countries, it can be assumed that local laws concur with Swiss law.
Animal experimentation

Basic principles

Responsible and proper handling of animals is a tenet of ethical conduct at ETH and a prerequisite for obtaining meaningful results in animal research. The ETH Zurich Executive Board is committed to promoting and enforcing compliance with current Swiss laws in its research groups. To this end, it has issued the «ETH Zurich Policy on Experimental Animal Research».

The Swiss Federal Animal Welfare Act specifies what is deemed to be an animal experiment. This includes experiments on living animals in which, for example, a scientific hypothesis, the results of a particular action on an animal or the effectiveness of a substance are to be investigated. Also teaching, training and further educational including use of animals and collection of cells, organs or body fluids from animals are animal experiments.

The Swiss Animal Protection Act is implemented by the Animal Welfare Ordinance and the Ordinance on Experiments with Animals. These also provide specifications on how genetically modified experimental animals may be kept.

Persons conducting or leading animal experiments must have completed compulsory initial training and regularly attend further education courses (4 days per 4 years). Persons conducting experiments can only work autonomously with laboratory animals when he/she has completed an introduction course in animal science (LTK1) or a similar course abroad and is approved by the cantonal veterinary office.

If you are planning a research experiment with animals, you will require a valid experiment permit. This can be obtained by submitting an application via the electronic animal experiment administration system e-tierversuche to the cantonal veterinary office. The application must describe in detail the experiment’s aims, the experimental procedure and, if applicable, the burden to which the animal will be subjected. For ethical purposes, the application must also compare the anticipated gain of knowledge with the expected burden to the animal.

After completing the experiment or at the end of the calendar year, the permit owner is required to report to the cantonal veterinary office all experiments conducted and all animals used via the e-tierversuche web application.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for implementing animal protection regulations lies with any person who carries out and manages an experiment. Overall responsibility lies with the resource manager.
Advice for day-to-day business

- The Animal Welfare Officer offers support with accessing the «e-tierversuche» animal experiment administration system and with applications and reports.

- Obtaining a permit for animal experiments takes time (several months). It is therefore advisable to submit applications well before planned start date.

- The experiment permit is limited to a maximum of three years and may contain restrictions. After formal approval before experiments can begin, there is a 30-day appeal period for objections.

- Any changes which have to be made to the experimental plans must be approved in advance by the cantonal veterinary office.

- Introductory courses in laboratory animal science fill quickly. It is possible to reserve course places even if you do not yet know the name of the participant.
Data protection in research

Basic principles

When using personal data in a research project, the owners of the data need to be informed in advance of the aim of the research activity. Those affected must give their consent for the data to be gathered, processed and stored.

Personal data is collected in situations such as the following: surveys; video or photo shoots of persons (e.g. in public places); use of information from person databases (e.g. customer data or member data); analysis of navigation data (GPS devices) or telecommunications data; examinations of human biological material (blood, tissues, organs etc.).

According to data protection laws, data is deemed to be personal data when the information refers to an identified or identifiable person. Anonymous data, however, is a form of data where personal identity cannot be established, not even if individual data is combined with other data (e.g. address and profession). Data protection law does not apply to anonymous data.

If data on third parties is gathered, stored and processed, these persons must also agree to the use of the data. This could be applicable when – in the case of a survey – not only data is gathered on the person in question, but when this person is also asked for information about family members or friends [snowball principle].

Responsibilities

Project leaders are responsible for communicating all data protection instructions and for ensuring compliance.

Contact

Dr. Raffael Iturrizaga
Office of Research
Tel. 044 632 23 54
raffael.iturrizaga@sl.ethz.ch
Advice for day-to-day business

Whenever possible, conduct your research project using anonymous data, as the legal compliance requirements in such cases are less rigid.

In order to anonymise data, it is not sufficient to delete the name of the person in question. You must also remove other information that could serve to identify a person with reasonable effort (e.g. E-mail address or employee number).

Further information

Website of the Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner

Legal basis

Federal Act on Data Protection (FDPA)
SR 235.1 →

Ordinance to the Federal Act on Data Protection
SR 235.11 →
ETH Zurich Law Collection and Classified Compilation of Federal Law

You can find all the valid and applicable acts, ordinances, directives and regulations governing organisation and processes at ETH Zurich in the ETH Zurich Law Collection (RSETHZ; www.rechtssammlung.ethz.ch →) or in the Classified Compilation of Federal Law (SR; https://www.admin.ch/gov/de/start/bundesrecht/systematische-sammlung.html →). You can search both registers by the title of enactment or its number (which is the more systematic approach).

Key doctrines of governance at ETH Zurich are:
- Federal Act on the Federal Institutes of Technology [FIT Act]: SR 414.110 →
- ETHZ-ETHL-Ordinance: SR 414.110.37 →
- Organisation Ordinance of ETH Zurich: RSETHZ 201.021 →
- Financial Regulations of ETH Zurich: RSETHZ 245 →

Disclaimer:
For reasons of user friendliness, the wording of the present Compliance Guide does not always correspond precisely to the legal wording of the respective acts and ordinances. Only the provisions set out in the original acts and ordinances and in ETH’s internal rules and regulations are legally binding and enforceable. You will find these enactments in the registers RSETHZ and SR described above.

Contact

Head of Legal Services Office:
Lic. iur. Brigitte Schiesser, attorney at law
Tel. 044 632 52 55
brigitte.schiesser@sl.ethz.ch