

Media release

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Founding of the Botnar Research Centre for Child Health

University of Basel and ETH Zurich combine cutting-edge research for children and adolescents worldwide

Today, the University of Basel and ETH Zurich co-founded the Botnar Research Centre for Child Health (BRCCH) in Basel. They bring together top scientists and clinical researchers from a variety of disciplines in order to develop new methods and digital innovations for global use in paediatrics. The BRCCH is funded by a CHF 100 million contribution from Fondation Botnar in Basel.

The BRCCH operating institutions are the University of Basel and ETH Zurich. The Research Centre's network also includes partner institutions such as the University Children's Hospital of Basel and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Basel. It combines the expertise of both universities in systems biology, medicine and various areas of life sciences, engineering, social sciences and information technology that are relevant to health. With the results it produces, the BRCCH will help to prevent diseases, develop new treatment approaches, improve diagnoses and effectiveness forecasts, and make healthcare systems more affordable. The BRCCH aims to generate tangible results: "We want to have an impact on the lives of children and adolescents," says Prof. Andrea Schenker-Wicki, Rector, University of Basel.

Transdisciplinary approach to research

At the BRCCH, basic researchers, clinical researchers and other scientists will collaborate closely in the fields of implementation research, health systems, health economics, educational science, ethics and law. The focus is on countries with limited resources, with the potential to implement solutions worldwide. This approach facilitates sustainable research and development with a direct benefit for the health of children and adolescents.

The BRCCH will focus on four main areas of paediatric research in particular: diabetes, infectious diseases/immunology, cardiorespiratory diseases and the restoration of bodily functions through regenerative surgery. A number of research areas have already been defined within these key fields. The focus will be on approaches geared to digital and

mobile healthcare solutions and to cell-based therapies. „Our aim is to develop groundbreaking digital solutions to improve the health of children and adolescents,” says Prof. Lino Guzzella, President, ETH Zurich.

Targeted investment by Fondation Botnar

The BRCCH is funded by a CHF 100 million contribution from Fondation Botnar in Basel, divided equally between the University of Basel and the ETH Zurich Foundation and spread over a 10-year period. Fondation Botnar is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents in fast-growing cities across the world. It invests in solutions that use and promote artificial intelligence and digital innovations. „Children and adolescents are a key part of our society. We want to give them tools to shape their lives successfully and to actively contribute to positive development. The BRCCH will provide many new solutions to help achieve this,” says Dr. Peter Lenz, President of the Board, Fondation Botnar. This involvement in the BRCCH represents a targeted investment by the foundation that was set up in 2003. While newly developed solutions are being introduced, Fondation Botnar will provide the BRCCH with access to its networks in a number of cities in Tanzania, Romania and elsewhere.

The Basel location

The Research Centre will begin its operational activities at the start of 2019 in Basel and will be expanded gradually. Basel, with its university, the Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering (D-BSSE) at ETH Zurich and numerous highly innovative companies in the areas of biotech and life sciences, is predestined to be home to the BRCCH.

Further information and download of pictures: www.brcch.org

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About University of Basel

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About ETH Zurich

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About Fondation Botnar

Fondation Botnar is a Swiss foundation based in Basel and established in 2003 to continue the philanthropic legacy of the Botnar family. The core purpose of the Foundation is to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in fast-growing urban environments around the world. Fondation Botnar acts as a catalyst, connecting diverse partners and investing in scalable artificial intelligence (AI) and digital innovations. Fondation Botnar is a member of SwissFoundations, the association of grant-making foundations in Switzerland.

www.fondationbotnar.org