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# COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING, STAYING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS, COOPERATING A SUCCESS.

#### HENRY FORD

american automobile manufacturer and innovator in the assembly line production. in the assembly line production.

## **IMPRESSUM**

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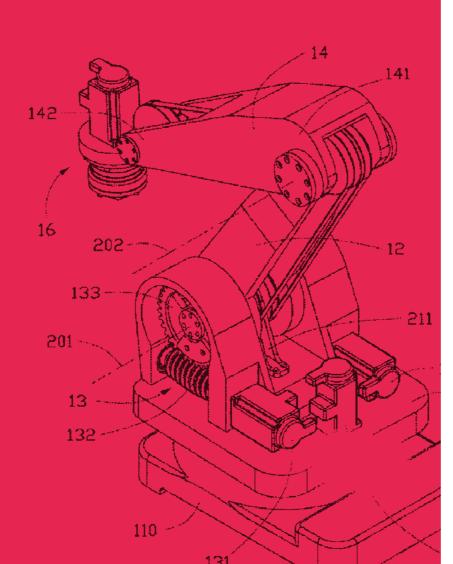
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Navigate by mouse click through the interactive annual report of hftm 2019.

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# A word from the president



#### Signing of new contracts with the cantons

The cantons of Berne and Solothurn have renewed the contracts of assignment and commission with the hftm for the years 2020 to 2023. The contracts, which are identical for both cantons, were submitted to the government councils for signing, after detailed negotiations with the relevant education authorities. In the canton of Solothurn, the cantonal parliament had to approve the transfer contract too. The competent preliminary advisory boards, the Board of Education and Culture and the Board of Finance, unanimously approved the extension of the contracts.

We have received a great deal of positive feedback from the cantonal politicians. The hftm is considered a gem in the western part of the canton of Solothurn – which is great recognition of our work. With the new contracts. we have been able to agree on a framework for the increase in part-time HF (higher technical education) courses of study. In 2018 and 2019, we had considerably more students than financed by the cantons, which explains the loss in the annual financial statements and the compensation by the reserve funds. In addition, we will continue to reduce cantonal financing in the next contractual period.

#### The hftm as education and implementation partner in the Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne SIPBB

The rental agreement has been signed and in July 2021, the hftm will relocate from Quellgasse to the new SIPBB building directly at Biel/Bienne railway station. The construction work is in full swing; the planning of the move and the interior furnishings are taking shape. The hftm will thus become an important partner in the ecosystem of the new building. Thanks to the ultra-modern facilities, laboratories and services, students and lecturers will have unique opportunities for in-depth

#### Strengthening of higher technical schools

The issue of the relevant State and National Council resolutions to strengthen the higher technical schools sends a strong signal that a lot now needs to change in policy and society. The State Secretariat for Education and Research SER has been commissioned to carry out an analysis and then take measures to strengthen the technical schools of higher education. The process is under way and the first results of this policy are

expected in late summer 2020. As one of the largest technical school with hftm s in Switzerland, we support these efforts. Graduates should now finally receive appropriate recognition from the business community. What is needed are graduation titles that are also easy to understand internationally, institutional recognition by educational providers and, in particular, much better public funding. We are committed to this and actively participate in working groups and committees.

#### **Continuing success**

We are doing everything in our power to sustain our success in the future. The educational opportunities are constantly being expanded. We are actively using the opportunities offered by digitalisation to further develop our teaching and learning processes. The hftm team is proving its ability to adapt to change and can quickly incorporate new trends into attractive educational proposals, which become highly appreciated.

Many thanks to the shareholders, the sponsors, the Board of Directors, the experts and the cantons of Solothurn and Berne for their kind assistance and support. We are powered onwards by the motivation and commitment of our students. I would like to express my special thanks to the employees, the lecturers, and the management under the leadership of Director Michael Benker. The positive team spirit is the basis for ongoing

I urge everyone to maintain their enjoyment, levels of enthusiasm and satisfaction.

**Board President** 

# .nnual report 2019 | Editorial

# A glance to the past and eyes on the future



#### Great value for the region and businesse

At our graduation ceremony, 130 diplomas were handed over to visibly proud Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education Engineering (in German: HF Techniker) graduates. It set a new record, with an increase of 8 percent compared to the strong previous year. To successfully complete the course, students work on a practical topic for six weeks. The diploma thesis places high demands on the students, as they must handle a challenging topic in a short time, find solutions, document the results in writing and present them to the expert committee.

The diploma thesis is otherwise known as the "crowning work" and shows whether the prospective Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education Engineering graduates can apply and relate what they have learned to practice. In doing so, they must deal with phases of project management and learn how to deal with all kinds of unforeseeable events in real-life practice.

The results are impressive! On the occasion of the two diploma theses exhibitions in Grenchen in June and in Biel/Bienne in September, it was clear to see what great results the students have achieved in only a short time - for their companies and our industrial partners. The diploma theses exhibitions are therefore a remarkable show of achievement for our graduates. The diploma theses very often generate a large, practice-oriented, and quickly attainable benefit for the clients, the companies in which our students work, and the industrial partners who provide the topics for the full-time studies.

Companies invest in the training of their employees and profit directly from it, because often the results of the theses enable an increase in productivity. Graduates ensure the transfer of new technologies, methods and digital skills, especially in the SME sector.

In this way, the hftm and its graduates make a significant contribution to increasing the competitiveness of the more than 200 companies in the Mittelland (Swiss plateau region), which have their employees trained by us as Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education Engineering graduates.

#### International exchange increases in significance

We have significantly expanded the range of courses for our students at an international level. In addition to the previously established exchange opportunities in Manchester, Wrexham, and Oulu, as well as at the annual participation in the RoboCup, we were able to win over the University of Bordeaux. We also have projects in Ethiopia and South Sudan. Our students are actively engaging in those opportunities. Four students have successfully completed their diploma theses at industrial companies in Oulu in the north of Finland, and six graduates began their bachelor's studies in Wrexham immediately after graduating as Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education Engineering graduates (HF Techniker). Several students from Oulu are also doing an internship semester with our industrial partners in Switzerland and selected hftm lecturers have visited our partner institutions in Oulu and Bordeaux for quest lectures. The four-week cultural and language stay in Manchester is considered very valuable and beneficial for our students.

Some students also acquired the Cambridge First Certificate in English during their stay. It turns out that most of our students have significantly better English skills than required by the framework curriculum. The global orientation of many companies requires international experience and English language skills. With the opportunities that we provide, we support our students in getting fit for the global arena.

#### Increasing demand for further training

Our offer of postgraduate courses, preparatory courses for professional examinations, as well as specialised further education and company training is well received. In particular, the opportunity to better prepare for HF studies with the Fit-4-HF pre-study course is very popular. By better preparing prospective students for their studies, we increase the success rate of our graduates. The courses to strengthen digitalisation skills were also well attended. Together with our industry partners, we are constantly expanding our market-oriented range of courses. In this way we are making a significant contribution by implementing the "Industry 4.0" vision.

#### Year of prizes and recognition

Our students have measured up well and won prizes in renowned competitions. Denoian Rishikeswaran achieved second place in the competition of the Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft des Kantons Bern (business society of the canton of Berne) and received a check for 1000 Swiss francs in the presence of Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis. The town of Grenchen also invited submissions for the redesign of the "Zytplatz" (a prime town square in Grenchen) and several students submitted their ideas. A top-class jury then selected Matthias Zumbrunnen's design as the winner. He was asked to develop his project further and present his concept plan to the Mayor of Grenchen. The crowning achievement was the victory of a team of third-year students at the Solothurn Chamber of Commerce's "Neugründer (Founder)-Challenge". They won the jury prize of 1000 Swiss francs with the "Smart Feeder", an automatic feeding machine for reptiles, equipped with sensor technology.

#### Sustainable success

Our graduates are highly sought-after specialists and managers. The companies receive trained professionals whose strengths lie in implementation. Ideas thus become successful products. The hftm promotes exchange between education and business. Our lecturers are

experts in their fields and thus enable a practice-oriented transfer of know-how.

New knowledge is thus finding its way to our business partners, for example with the employment of a digital twin in mechanical engineering, in new production techniques or in robotics. Up-to-date and future-driven skills enable our graduates and the companies to sustain success in the long term.

We have also addressed sustainable development. We want to raise awareness of sustainability amongst our students, as they will be important decision-makers in companies in the future. Last autumn, the students planted around 200 oak trees on the eastern outskirts of Biel/Bienne to anchor the students in a very handson sustainability context. An unforgettable experience for everyone involved.

As a premium educational institution, we will continue in 2020 to make a significant contribution to reducing the shortage of skilled workers in Mathematics, Computer Science, Natural Science and Engineering occupations in the Mittelland and beyond. We act sustainably and are continuing to develop ourselves and our students on the path to success.

#### Investments

Smart-Grid-Laboratory

Measuring instruments in Electrical Engineering

Remotely-operable Regulatory Engineering

Mechatronic learning system MPS Festo

Integration lathe post-processor

Continuing development of web-based training

Digitalisation of financial processes

School management system

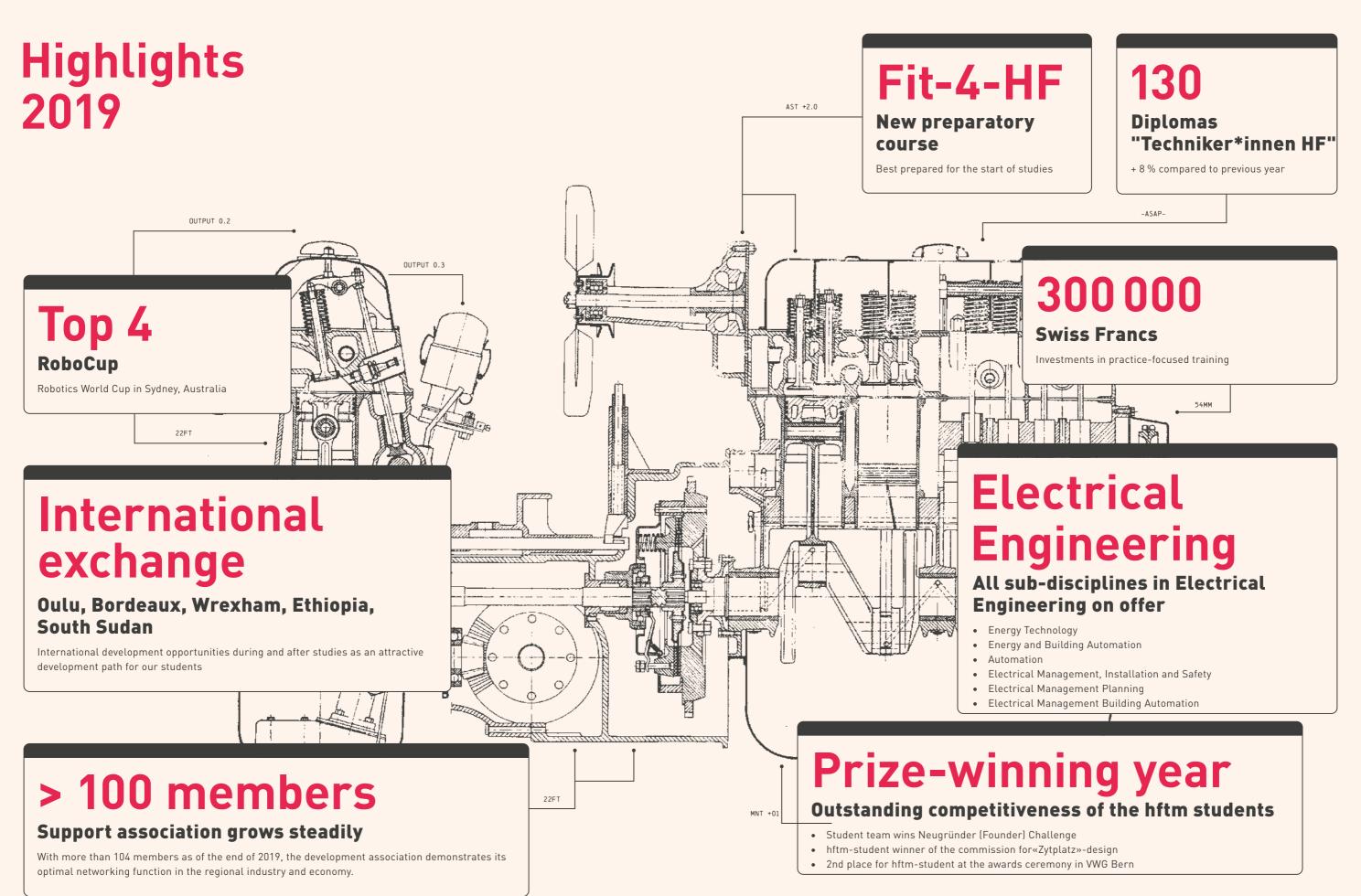
SharePoint structure

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MICHAEL BENKE

Director

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# Study programmes

### An overview of the study programmes at the hftm

### Adv. Fed. Diploma of Higher Educatiom in Electrical Engineering

**Electrical Engineering** 

**Energy Technology** 

**Building Automation** 

#### Adv. Fed. Diploma of Higher Education in Information Technology

Software Development

**Business Information Technology** 

#### Adv. Fed. Dipl. of Higher Edu. in Business Process Management

Facility Management

**Business Logistics** 

#### Adv. Fed. Diploma of Higher Edu. in Mechanical Engineering

Construction Technology

**Production Technology** 

#### Adv. Fed. Diploma of Higher Edu. in Systems Engineering

Systems Engineering

Automation/ICT Mechatronic Engi vneering

Adv. Fed. Diploma of Higher Edu. Industrial Manager NDS

## • • • • • • • • • • • • <sup>1</sup>German and French speaking postgraduate study programme

#### Students at the hftm

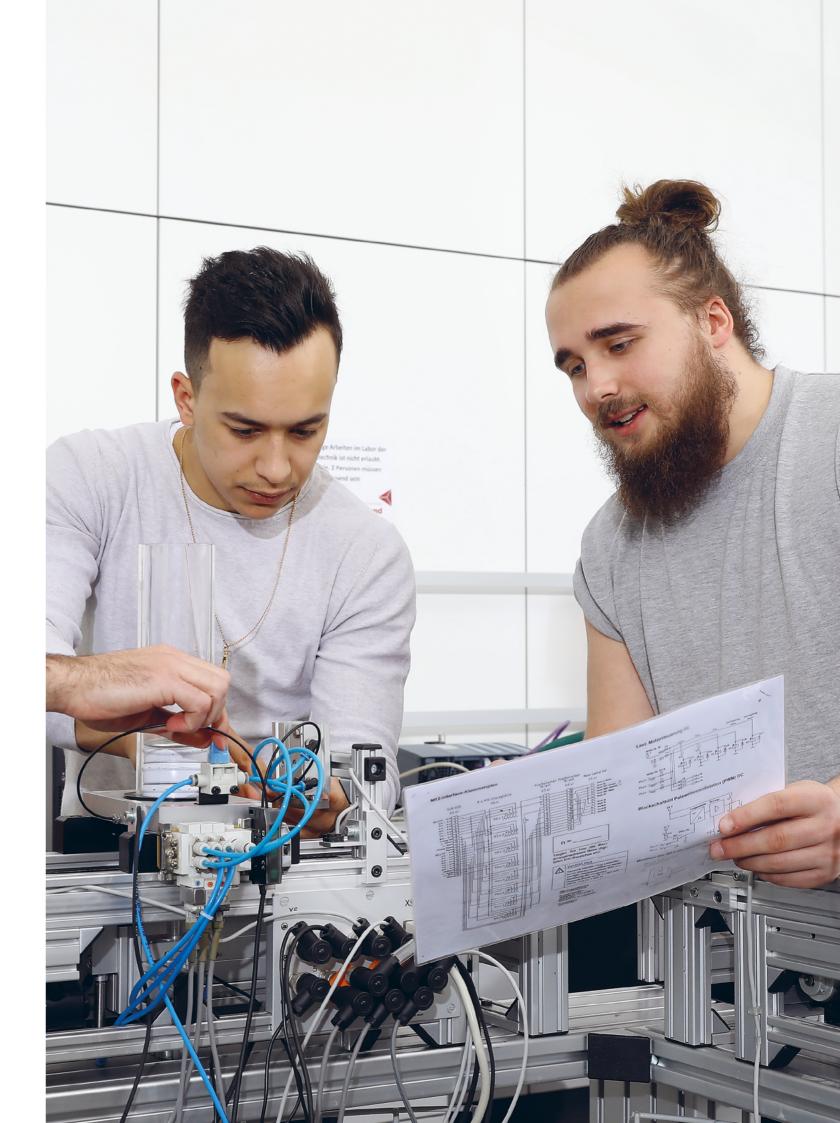
In 2019, the number of students stayed at the same level as the previous year. In spring, we welcomed 113 new students. In the full-time courses of study which start in autumn, the usual solid registration figures were sustained with an additional 48 new admissions, including 11 French-speaking students.

There was a very high demand for courses in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering with 44 and 52 students respectively. Just under a quarter of all students chose full-time training at the school campus in Biel; the remaining three quarters decided to study part-time at the Grenchen campus.

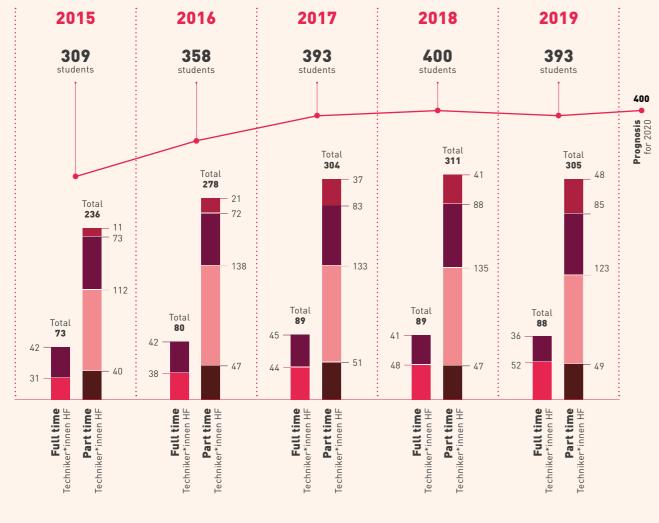
The places of residence of full-time students were primarily the cantons of Berne and Solothurn. A total of 199 students (50.6%) were residents of the canton of Berne. 149 students (37.9 %) of the canton of Solothurn and a further 45 students (11.5 %) in other cantons such as Fribourg, Ticino, Uri, Zurich

and Neuchâtel. Most students had completed a 4-year apprenticeship. By far the largest occupational groups represented were multi-skilled mechanics, electricians and automation technicians. The median age of entry for part-time studies was 23. The students were between the ages of 20 and 44 at the time of starting their training at the hftm. The full-time students were youngest, with a median age of 22 years.

The average class size for foundation and specialised studies was a solid 20 students per class in the parttime courses and 22 students per class in the full-time courses. In the core study programmes, further group divisions were necessary for the transfer to practice and teaching in the laboratories. The proportion of women to total number of students was 2.8%.



## Student statistics for previous years



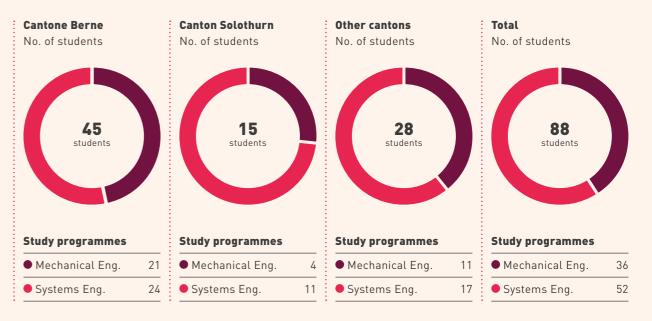
#### Full time

## Mechanical EngineeringSystems Engineering

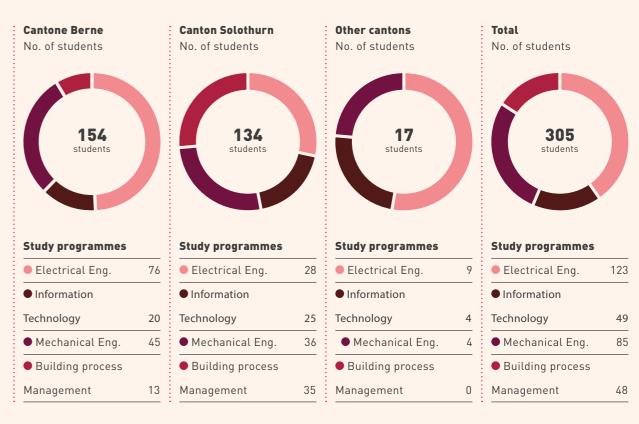
#### Part time

- Business Process Management
- Mechanical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Information Technology

## **Fulltime Study**



## Part time study programmes



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# RoboCup 2019

Sydney, Australia

#### **Top Placings again**

Between 4 and 7 July 2019, the world's top robotics experts met in Sydney, Australia. The eight-member hftm Solidus team was not to be underestimated. As every year, the team was made up of students in the second year of fulltime study programmes in Systems Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. A crowdfunding campaign, which generated almost 7,000 Swiss francs, helped the team to cope with the high travel costs and necessary investments for the RoboCup. A big thankyou goes to the sponsors, some of whom have been supporting the team very generously for years: Bystronic Laser AG, hftm Sponsoring Association and Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne.

After a sightseeing tour, the team quickly overcame the jetlag and was ready for the demanding setup days. After mastering smaller challenges with professionalism, the Robotinos were ready for the competition.

The biggest optical innovation of the hftm-Robotinos did not go unnoticed for long. With LED-underground illumination, the students could now visualise the status of the robots. During the exploration phase, the hftm Solidus team was able to achieve several successes and for the first time the product "C1" was produced. With a few victories and defeats in the bag, the students entered the semi-final, whereby the French team "Pyro" was able to secure the win due to a better performance. With their excellent fourth place position, the hftm Solidus team set off on their return journey to Switzerland, and their success was celebrated with welcome-home drinks. "This year we had some very good students who invested a lot and achieved a lot. During the competitions they were very focused and solved their assigned tasks excellently. We are very proud of them," said the team of supervisors after the competition.



v.l.n.r.: Matthias Studer (Dozent Systemtechnik und Team-Betreuer), Manuel Stöckli, Adrian Hayoz, Simon Pfister, Jonas Jauslin, Simon Attah, Sven Blaser, Alain Rohr (Dozent ICT/Mechatronik und Mitglied des technischen Komitees des RoboCups)





THE ROBOCUP **EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN ONE OF THE BEST IN MY LIFE** 

MANUEL STÖCKLI

Solidus Team Leader Team





I WANTED TO BE A PART OF THE **ROBOCUP-TEAM-MORE THAN ANYTHING** 

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**SIMON ATTAH** 

Team Solidus



I AM PROUD OF MY-PERFORMANCE AND EXPERIENCE.

**SVEN BLASER** 

Team Solidus



## **International**

hftm goes worldwide

As a premium education provider, the hftm consciously focuses on strengthening international exchange. International internships, exchange programmes and bachelor courses offer students the opportunity to develop their foreign language skills and personal networks - something that is becoming increasingly important in the highly networked, global business world. Experience abroad has a decisive influence on various soft skills such as independence, a sense of responsibility and the development of intercultural competence. It is an absolutely welcome broadening of horizons, which can be a valuable "door-opener" for job applications.

As an educational institution, the hftm benefits from the direct transfer of knowledge through the exchange of lecturers with other international universities and universities of Applied Sciences. The participation in international projects enables students and lecturers to develop practical fields of application in a global context. With the skills acquired during their studies, bridges are built to other nations, which generate direct added value. The search for significance and the desire to do things with meaning is exactly what can be realised in one of these exchange programs. The hftm is convinced that the future is global and has therefore strengthened this agenda with the assigning of Urs Schild as Coordinator of International Relations.

## SEMP (Swiss-European Mobility) Programme und

An important milestone in the continuously growing international commitment of the hftm has been accreditation by the agency Movetia. This accreditation enables the hftm students to participate in the SEMP and Erasmus+ programmes, which promote and co-finances international exchange of students and lecturers.

#### University of Applied Sciences Oulu, Finland

The successful exchange programme that has been taking place since 2018 between the University of Applied Sciences Oulu, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, and the hftm, Faculties of Mechanical Engineering and Systems Engineering, fulltime study, was expanded in 2019. The newly signed cooperation agreement underlines the common interests. In 2019, a total of six students and one lecturer took advantage of the opportunity to gain experience in this domain. The internships give the students the opportunity to gain experience in a new field of activity, in an unknown, foreign company with a different culture and language. In addition, so-called exchange meetings promote the exchange of ideas and networking opportunities with other exchange students. Lecturers also benefit from their experience outside their everyday school life in Switzerland. The feedback is more than positive, the hosts are very involved and helpful, making it easier to find our way in a foreign country."

#### IUT Bordeaux, France

The IUT Bordeaux in France has around 4,000 students and is affiliated with the University of Bordeaux, which is one of the three largest universities in France. After the IUT visit, Michael Benker and the hftm's Coordinator of International Relations, Urs Schild, signed a cooperation agreement making their mutual endeavours official.

The thumbs up for the new exchange opportunities between the two institutes has been given. The first internships have already been organised for 2020. Many thanks to the companies in our network and to the sponsors who offer internships for exchange students. An exchange of this kind not only offers students invaluable added value, the companies also provide well-trained specialists with new ideas, solutions and vicions.



Stefan Aebersold, fulltime student, during his stay in Finland for his thesis



IT IS A GREAT THING TO BE ABLE TO EARN THE DEGREE IN ONLY 3 YEARS. IT WILL OFFER ME THE BEST OF OP-PORTUNITIES IN THE JOB MARKET.



#### Young Entrepreneur Exchange Project (YEEP)

The Young Entrepreneur Exchange Project (YEEP) was originally a joint initiative of Hawassa University (HU) in Ethiopia, Berne University of Applied Sciences (BFH) and The Business Machine (BM) in Switzerland. The project brings students together and encourages them to found start-up companies in Ethiopia.

YEEP is convinced that self-determined, enterprising young people are the greatest capital of our planet. It supports students in Ethiopia and Switzerland in working together, learning from each other and founding companies. These in turn create the jobs, prosperity and development of the civic societies of the future. The first project of this kind started as early as 2014. In 2019, the Young Entrepreneur Exchange Project was extended and the hftm was integrated as an educational partner with a practical focus and technical know-how. The hftm is greatly looking forward to this exchange project, and several students from fulltime and parttime courses have registered for it in 2020.

#### Oulu - Biel

- Aleksi Jolanki internship at Firma Protoshape
- Aleksi Isoherranen internship at Swiss Innovation Park

#### Biel – Oulu

- Michael Imboden and Silvan Horat –
   internship and thesis at Firma Greenled
- Pablo Scharowski and Stefan Aebersold internship and thesis at the company Masterkilpi

#### Biel - Oulu - Biel - Bordeaux

• Urs Schild – courses as exchange lecturer of 6–100 students

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#### **EFORD Project**

#### Swiss partners

Swisspeace (project coordinator)

Centre for Development and the Environment

(CDE), Berne Uni

Swiss Tropical and Public Health

Institute (Swiss-TPH)

Swiss Federal Institute for

Vocational Education and Training (EHB)

School of Agricultural, Forestry and Food

Sciences (HAFL)

Technical School of Higher Education (hftm)

#### **International partners**

Birzeit University, Palestine

Centre for Peace and Development Studies,

South Sudan

Swiss Centre for Scientific Research, Ivory

Coast

# EFORD and EPOS projects

# E-Powering South Sudan Higher Education: Practical training in photovoltaics supports the sustainable development of South Sudan

The hftm, as a technical school of higher education, is one of six Swiss partners in the swissuniversities Sudac-Cofer project called EFORD (Education for Development). There are also three southern international partners, namely Palestine, Southern Sudan and Ivory Coast. The duration of the project is four years (2017-2020) and right from the beginning there was the intention to develop follow-up projects. The stated aim is to support the sustainable development of the partner countries through knowledge and skills transfer in the fields of education and research. The hftm and Swisspeace have now developed a promising follow-up project with the University of Juba in South Sudan, which was approved by the SDC shortly before Christmas. The joint project is called EPOS, E-Powering South Sudan Higher Education, and will run for

The capital of the youngest country in the world is called Juba and is located in the country's south, about 100 km north of the border to Uganda, directly on the White Nile, which has a width of about 250 metres. The University of Juba is the most important university in South Sudan, a multi-ethnic country with twelve million inhabitants in an area the size of France. After a war of liberation lasting decades, South Sudan was able to free itself from the Muslim North and was then abruptly halted in its development by a civil war between supporters of the President and those of the Vice-President.

The current peace treaty and the efforts to integrate the various population groups into the government give us hope today. The country has large oil reserves, which are mainly produced by Chinese companies in the north of the country. The country does not yet have a network infrastructure for the supply of electricity. Electricity is usually generated by generators, which are loud and petrol-driven, making the supply therefore unstable. The country has a lot of sunlight, an ideal prerequisite for promoting decentralised generation of electricity with photovoltaics. This requires engineers, technicians and installers who have knowledge of planning, construction, operation and maintenance of such plants.

And this is where our role in the project comes in: We support the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Juba in the establishment of a photovoltaic training laboratory and in developing the corresponding curricula. The first training courses for the university's lecturers and assistants are being conducted by our experts with the support of hftm students in the energy technology course. Afterwards, the lecturers of the University of Juba are able to take over the education and training for the up-and-coming engineers and technicians. Well-educated and practice-oriented engineering graduates of the University of Juba can thus make a significant contribution to a sustainable energy supply in South Sudan in the future.

The project is an exciting and unusual challenge for our lecturers and students - we are very confident that we will be able to complete the project successfully. It is quite conceivable that the cooperation with the University in Juba will continue after the completion of this project.

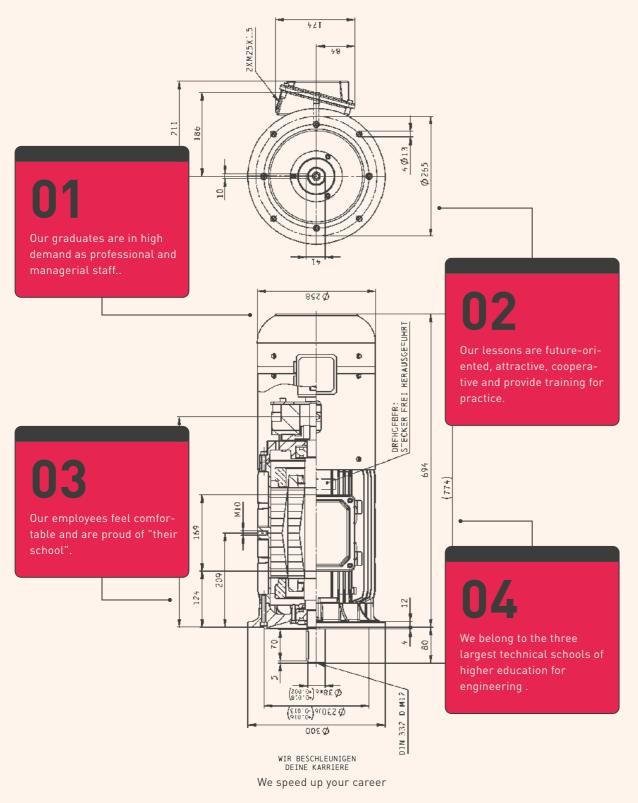


From left to right: Professor Dr. Leben Moro, Institute Directorr, Michael Benker and Christian Grossenbacher during their visit in South Sudan in 2019.

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# **Our Vision**

The hftm is the leading technical school of higher education in Switzerland.



# Our Values

competent.clever.agile.

### competent.

As a leading educational institution, the hftm imparts in-depth theoretical knowledge as well as providing a unique and comprehensive arenas for practical experience. It is purely the practical application of knowledge that enables the development of those diverse competencies that distinguish our lecturers and students from others.

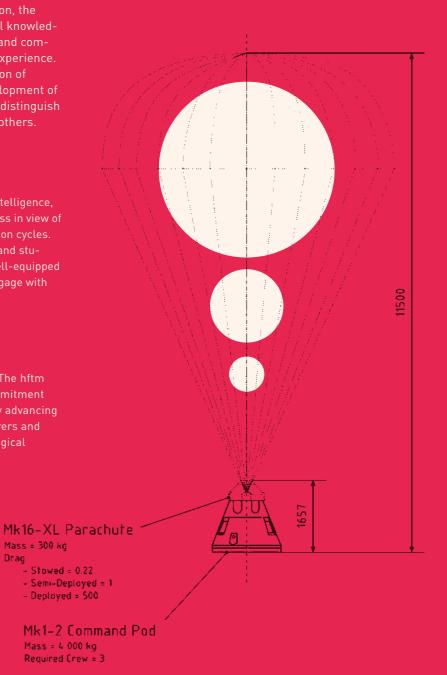
#### clever.

The hftm builds competence and intelligence, which are two key factors for success in view of accelerated and globalised innovation cycles. Tuned-in and clever, our lecturers and students, are practitioners who are well-equipped with the knowledge and actively engage with all aspects of the digital future.

## agile.

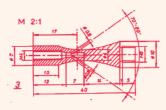
Mediocrity is the enemy of better. The hftm is agile and on the move, with commitment and passion on the pulse of rapidly advancing technological development. Lecturers and students live and breathe technological trends in practice and in teaching.

Stage	TWR (K)	Δv (vac)	Time
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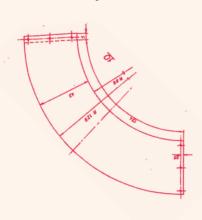
# **Mission statement**

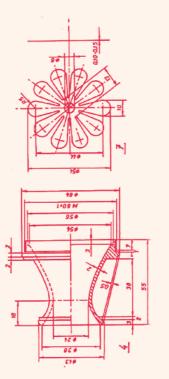
### competent. clever. agile.



We are the leading technical school of higher education for engineering in Switzerland. We are developing into a financially independent, non-profit, entrepreneurially managed premium educational institution with a broad-based sponsorship in the Mittelland region. We are striving to be an outstanding company and school organisation based on the EFQM Excellence Model, and are committed to the philosophy of continuous improvement and sustainable success.

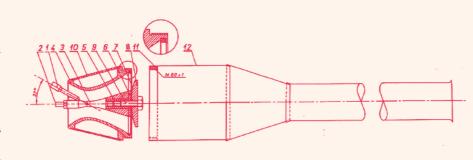
We make a significant contribution to reducing the shortage of skilled workers - primarily in the Mittelland, in full-time studies throughout Switzerland, by training qualified, hard-working specialists and managers in engineering and providing higher vocational education and training.

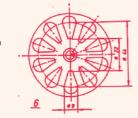


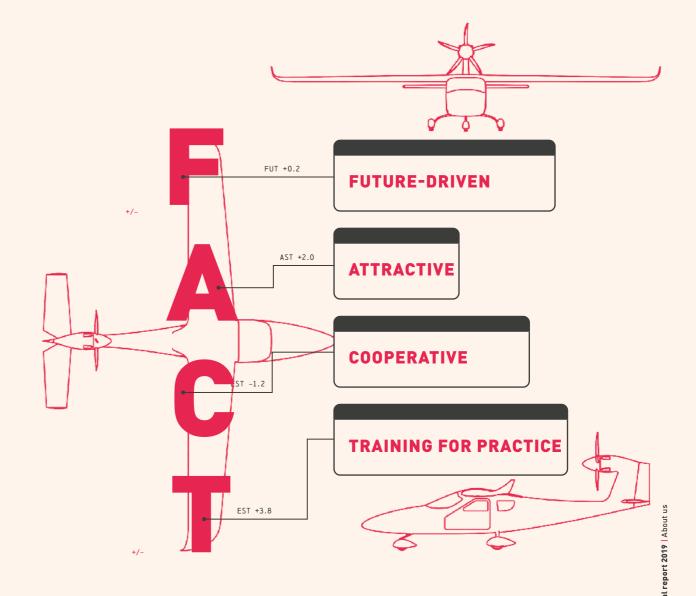


Our graduates are highly sought-after specialists and managers. We are networked with the economy and constantly in dialogue. Companies prefer to choose us as their training partner for technical training and further education. We regularly surprise with innovative ideas and are a benchmark in terms of educational concepts, practical relevance and the close connections between students and companies. Our laboratory facilities are unique and enable students to effectively transfer what they have learned into practice. We make consistent use of the opportunities offered by digitalisation and students have open access to our expertise.

Our classes can be summed up with the acronym "FACT" - (F) future-oriented, (A) attractive, (C) cooperative and providing of (T) training for practice. Our lecturers inspire with outstanding technical, social and didactic skills, life-long learning, and they provide training in line with real-life practice requirements. The diverse skills that distinguish our lecturers and students thrive in a dialogue between theory and practice. We provide the business community with competence and cleverness, two key factors for success in the face of accelerated and globalised innovation cycles. Our lecturers and students are alert and smart. As practitioners well-equipped with the knowledge, they actively engage with all aspects of the digital future.







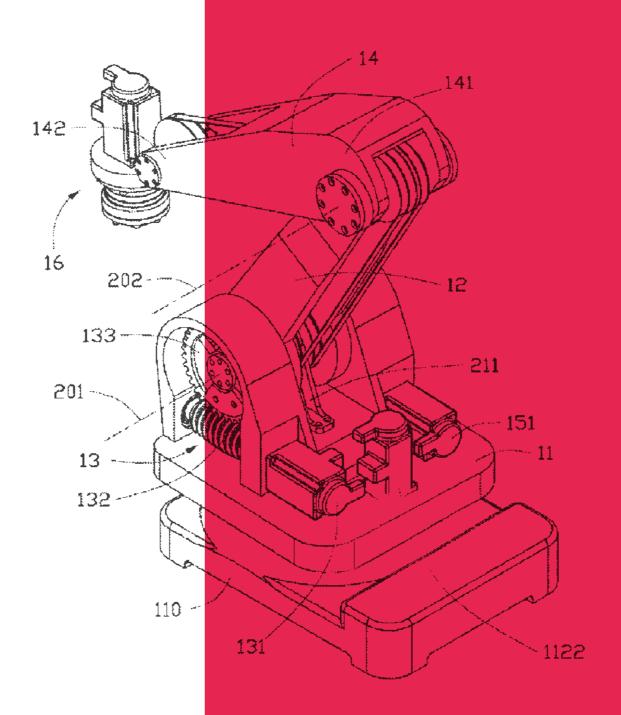
## leadership. fact. network. passion.

Our employees feel comfortable and are proud of their school. Our working environment is attractive and encourages friendly cooperation. We actively network in the region, in Switzerland, and also internationally. Our language skills in German, French and English enable us to network beyond language and national borders.

The hftm and its employees are agile and flexible in dealing with change. Equipped with personality and passion, we live the duality principle of linking theory with practice. We see ourselves as versatile and flexible. Our lecturers and students focus on the future and we incorporate technological trends into our training concept at an early stage. We see ourselves as trendsetters at the level of higher vocational training. In a relaxed atmosphere, study and work-driven people strive towards mutual progress and success.

Communication is direct, easy-going and respectful - cooperation is key - as well as being open and honest with a good portion of "can-do spirit". At the hftm, everyone is ready to go the extra mile.

Our processes are well thought-out and "lean". Our management practices are exemplary, value-oriented, participative, decisive, inclusive, success-oriented and full of passion. There is open discussion in the team, mistakes are permitted, - failure is a part of learning - and action takes priority over administration. The chosen concepts and approaches are uncomplicated and comprehensible. Thus, we live a professional ethic of integrity, which guides us in our professional activities and teaching.





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