

Of 15 July 2022, status as at 1 January 2025

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*The Direction of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne*

based on Article 3, para. 1, letter a of the *Ordonnance du Conseil des EPF sur les Écoles polytechniques fédérales de Zürich et de Lausanne*,  
based on Art. 4, para. 1 letter a of the *Ordinance on the Organisation of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne*  
hereby adopts the following:

## **Chapter 1 – General provisions**

### **Article 1 – Definition and scope of application**

<sup>1</sup> A center for the purposes of these regulations is a transdisciplinary unit with a specific research, training or advancement mission surrounding a specific issue; administratively, it reports to the Associate Vice Presidency for Centers and Platforms.

<sup>2</sup> A center is an EPFL unit that is treated as a support service under Article 25 of the Ordinance on the Organization of EPFL of 1 March 2004, as amended on 1 January 2025 ([LEX 1.1.1](#)).

<sup>3</sup> The mission of a center is to centralize scientific knowledge about societal, scientific and technological topics that are important for EPFL's position in Switzerland and abroad, and which are not anchored in the School's organizational structure.

### **Article 2 – Subject**

<sup>1</sup> These regulations define the structure, organization and life cycle of the EPFL centers defined in Article 1 above, and govern their areas of expertise and responsibilities.

<sup>2</sup> Centers shall exercise their authority and carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the applicable laws and directives and with general EPFL policy.

### **Article 3 – The missions of a center**

<sup>1</sup> Centers shall contribute to EPFL's three missions (education, research and innovation) by:

- creating networks in the scientific community on a topic that is not dealt with globally within a school, college or associated Campus of EPFL located outside the canton of Vaud;
- positioning EPFL with respect to broad, complex societal and/or scientific/technological topics, or with respect to interdisciplinary areas of research;
- bringing added value to researchers who are working on and/or are interested in a particular subject or topic;
- making the topics visible inside and outside of EPFL and promoting the transfer of knowledge;
- contributing to the development of interdisciplinary teaching projects, semester/Master's projects, doctoral dissertations and internships;
- contributing to EPFL's influence and promoting and increasing the visibility of the research carried out at EPFL about the topic in question;
- communicating with the public about the center's topics.

<sup>2</sup> The centers' specific missions are defined in the documents and any agreements that govern each of them individually.

#### **Article 4 – Creation of a center**

<sup>1</sup> The decision to create a center is made by the EPFL Direction following a consultation organized in accordance with Article 19 para. 2 of the Ordonnance sur l'EPFZ et l'EPFL ([LEX 1.0.3](#)).

<sup>2</sup> The decision to create a center shall be accompanied by a mandate and a financial plan for the period in question, specifying the source of funds.

<sup>3</sup> Before the EPFL Direction makes a decision, the request to create a center shall be evaluated by the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs on the basis of a file presenting the center's academic vision and its impact within EPFL and beyond, and also presenting the governance and the financial plan for a period of four to 12 years.

#### **Article 5 – Life cycle and duration**

<sup>1</sup> The mandate given by the EPFL Direction to a center is as a rule for a period of four years, which can be renewed a maximum of two times, subject to the particular decision of the EPFL Direction in specific cases.

<sup>2</sup> Each four-year mandate shall be evaluated before it expires by the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs using the process specified in Annex 1 to these regulations.

<sup>3</sup> On the basis of the results of the evaluation for the period in question and any recommendations by the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs, the EPFL Direction will decide whether to renew the mandate for a new four-year period, in consultation with all the partners concerned (including the partner institutions for interinstitutional centers).

<sup>4</sup> If the mandate is not renewed for a new four-year period, the EPFL Direction will decide on the terms and the deadline for closing the center.

<sup>5</sup> As the end of the third mandate approaches, i.e., at least 18 months prior to the end of the mandate, the center's management may submit an exceptional request for renewal of the center on the basis of a new mandate whose subject matter/approach to the topics dealt with differs from the first mandate. Such renewal shall be decided by the EPFL Direction following an evaluation in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 3 above.

## ***Chapter 2 – Organization and powers***

#### **Article 6 – Organization**

<sup>1</sup> As a rule, a center will comprise the following bodies:

- Steering Committee
- Operational Director
- Advisory Board

<sup>2</sup> Interinstitutional centers are organized and run in keeping with the provisions set out in an ad hoc interinstitutional agreement.

<sup>3</sup> If a center does not include the bodies listed in paragraph 1 above, the following rules apply:

- a. If there is no Steering Committee, the missions and powers assigned to that body in Article 8 of these regulations are placed under the responsibility of the center's Academic Director or, failing that, of the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.
- b. If there is no Operational Director, the missions assigned to that person in Article 9 of these regulations are placed under the responsibility of the Steering Committee or, failing that, of the center's Academic Director or of the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.

### **Article 7 – Steering Committee – organization**

<sup>1</sup> As a rule, the Steering Committee will be made up of four (4) to six (6) persons who are members of EPFL:

- A President, who is an EPFL professor and will serve as the Academic Director of the center,
- Three (3) to five (5) members representing topics, schools, institutes and other units concerned, and the center's partner institutions, if any.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The President/Academic Director will be appointed by the EPFL Direction for a renewable four-year term.

<sup>3</sup> The members of the Steering Committee will be appointed for renewable four-year terms by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the recommendation of the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.

<sup>4</sup> The Steering Committee will meet regularly, at least three times a year, when convened by the President or at the request of one third of its members.

<sup>5</sup> The Operational Director will be a permanent guest at Steering Committee meetings, without the right to vote.

<sup>6</sup> The Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms may attend Steering Committee meetings without a right to vote, depending on the subjects being discussed.

<sup>7</sup> The Steering Committee will meet at least once a year with the Advisory Board.

### **Article 8- Steering Committee – powers**

<sup>1</sup> The principal role of the Steering Committee, under the responsibility of its President, is to guide the center's strategic development. To this end, it:

- defines the center's strategy and draws up its performance mandate for approval by the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.
- initiates and coordinates the allocation of research funds via requests for proposals.
- searches for and proposes research projects that may be of interest to researchers associated with the center.
- supports and coordinates the research and development projects carried out by the center.
- promotes the networking of researchers with the industrial and innovation environments, in cooperation with the Vice Presidency for Innovation.
- reports the needs of the center to the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms, reports on the center's operating strengths and weaknesses and identifies opportunities and threats related to its development.
- prepares the center's annual activity report, with the assistance of the Operational Director.
- contributes to the process of evaluating the center, in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex 2.
- may set up internal committees and/or working groups to which it delegates specific tasks.

<sup>2</sup> The Academic Director, in their capacity as President of the Steering Committee, will report to the Associate Vice President for Center and Platforms and work closely with the center's Operational Director.

### **Article 9 – Operational Director – missions and powers**

<sup>1</sup> As a rule, a center is led by an Operational Director, who reports hierarchically and functionally to the President of the Steering Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> If appropriate, the Steering Committee may also include a defined number of representatives of partner institutions (funding bodies, national and international research programs, etc.).

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<sup>2</sup> The Operational Director of a center will be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the recommendation of the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.

<sup>3</sup> As the unit head, the Operational Director may be assisted by the employees assigned to them.

<sup>4</sup> In collaboration with the services of the Associate Vice Presidency for Centers and Platforms, the Operational Director implements the strategy and measures for improvement periodically prepared with the President of the Steering Committee of the center and approved by the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms.

<sup>5</sup> The Operational Director will organize and manage the center's daily activities in matters including but not limited to personnel, finance, communications, research, education and cooperation within EPFL. They provide administrative support to the Steering Committee of the center and its Advisory Board.

<sup>6</sup> The Operational Director proposes the annual budget for approval by the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms. They are also responsible for monitoring and updating every year the four-year plan for the center that was submitted when it was created or when its mandate was renewed.

<sup>7</sup> The Operational Director is responsible for submitting the annual financial report to the Associate Vice Presidency for Centers and Platforms. They will draw up the annual report of the center's activity in cooperation with the President of the Steering Committee.

<sup>8</sup> Via its services, the Associate Vice Presidency for Centers and Platforms provides support for the Operational Director of the center with regards to financial planning, reporting and controlling, administration, regulations and governance, and with workflows and information systems.

## **Article 10 – The Advisory Board**

<sup>1</sup> As a rule, the Advisory Board is made up of three to six members appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the recommendation of the Associate Vice President for Centers and Platforms, in agreement with the Steering Committee of the center.

<sup>2</sup> The members of the Advisory Board are independent experts from the academic, cultural, institutional and economic communities. They will be appointed for a term of four years. They will not be remunerated, but any travel expenses incurred for participation in the meetings will be reimbursed in accordance with the relevant EPFL rules.

<sup>3</sup> The Advisory Board will provide the Steering Committee with general strategy recommendations.

<sup>4</sup> In particular, its members are responsible for:

- identifying subjects of strategic importance to the center and informing the Steering Committee of them;
- exploring with the center the best way to conduct collaborative activities with partners;
- providing advice on the development of the center's program of activities.

<sup>5</sup> The members of the Advisory Board are encouraged to act as ambassadors for the center at conferences and with organizations involved in the center's fields of expertise. In this way they will contribute to increasing the visibility of the center and to building partnerships with the academic, cultural, institutional and economic sectors, both public and private.

<sup>6</sup> The Advisory Board meets at least once a year, and also at least once a year with the Steering Committee. Meetings may be held in person, by video or via conference calls.

## **Chapter 3 – Final Provisions**

### **Article 11 – Entry into force**

These regulations entered into force on 15 July 2022, status as at 1 January 2025 (version 1.1).

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

President:  
Anna Fontcuberta i Morral

Director of Legal Affairs:  
Françoise Chardonnens

### **Annexes**

Annex 1: Procedure for Evaluating Centers