



Swiss Research Management Development Initiative

Kick-off event, 27 September 2007

Hotel Bellevue Palace, Bern

Summary

The Swiss Research Management Development Initiative, worked out by the SARMA for more than a year, has finally been launched. On Thursday, 27 September, a panel of prominent guests and SARMA representatives met in the Hotel Bellevue in Bern to discuss their points of view regarding the initiative and to give it a kick start. Rolf Steinmann and Hans-Caspar Bodmer, members of the SARMA board and main drivers of the initiative, lead through the three hour program. In his introduction, Rolf Steinmann summarized the main objectives of the initiative and brought the greetings of Ian Carter, Chair of the ARMA, UK. In cooperation with the ARMA UK and other research management associations, the SARMA initiative is going to become an international programme.

After the introduction, guest speakers presented various aspects concerning the initiative from their position as representatives of industry and the public sector in a number of breakthrough sessions.

In the first session, Ursula Renold, Head of Swiss Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology, gave a presentation on research policy with special regard to research management.

Then Prof. Peter Meier-Abt, Vice President Research, University of Basel, gave an overview of public research topics. His main points were the collaboration between industry and academia, the research strategy in life sciences at the University of Basel, translational research, and technology transfer in general.

Beat Butz, Head of Targeted Research, SNF, expanded into the matter of public research funding. Also included in his speech were management needs in large research programmes and academic career planning.

The final presentation was given by Niggi Iberg, Head People and Communication, F. Hoffmann-LaRoche AG. Mr. Iberg represented the industrial sector by showing how he sees the role of research managers in industrial research. He raised the issues of talent management and expected competencies for the next generation leaders.

Each presentation was followed by a panel discussion. Finally each of the participants summed up his/her personal view of the SARMA initiative.

The responses were positive throughout. There were no doubts that it is a necessity to develop the research management profession further in the way proposed by SARMA. The ideas that have been put forward by the SARMA board were constructively complemented and extended by the ideas of the participants. The launching event was thus perceived as a success by everyone and is a motivating start into a new era for the SARMA and for research management in Switzerland and in other participating countries. The collected ideas about how to proceed with the development of the SARMA initiative will be presented and discussed at the info event "SARMA Swiss Research Management Development Initiative" on 8 November.

Participants in the panel were Matthias Kaiserswerth, Director, IBM Research GmbH, Peter Bachmann, Head Human Resources, Swisscom Innovations, Prof. Ernst Buschor, ETH Council, François Clerc, Consultant/Partner, SpencerStuart, Gérard Escher, Vice Director, State Secretariat for Education and Research, Catherine Trachsel, Business and Development Relations, IBM Research GmbH, Jakob Roost, Vice Director a.i., WSL.

The SARMA was represented by Ralf Longwitz, Florence Schmid and Georg Spescha.

The launching event was organised by the Piar AG and kindly sponsored by the ETH council.