

Press release – March 29, 2016

**Lausanne to be the epicentre of brain research in May 2016**

**For the third time, The Brain Forum will bring together top scientists, and entrepreneurs from the world's biggest "brain initiatives". The event will run in collaboration with EPFL from May 26th to May 27th at the SwissTech Convention Center in Lausanne, Switzerland.**

First launched in 2013, The Brain Forum is one of the most important global platforms for progress in the domain of brain research. It connects researchers, engineers, healthcare professionals, entrepreneurs, industrialists, investors, funding agencies and policy makers to advance our understanding of how the brain works and to accelerate the application of that understanding to human needs. In short, one of the main aims of The Brain Forum is to help in translating science into real world solutions.

Dr. Jamil El-Imad, CEO of The Brain Forum, comments: "We want to include anyone with an interest in the brain. We hope that our different but complementary experiences and perspectives can help to overcome the biggest challenges of this era. You can't build the future based on present assumptions so we need to develop our thinking and be open to spontaneous opportunities that may lead to the necessary serendipity for innovation".

The first edition in Switzerland last year was a great success. This year, the main objective will be to enhance the attendance of the international community, to raise awareness of brain science at a global level and to stimulate worldwide and unified efforts to tackle some of the biggest healthcare challenges of this century. "We once again have a great line-up of world-renowned experts who promise to give fascinating insights into cutting-edge research, advancements in our understanding of the brain and the impact and application of that knowledge. We welcome back the global brain initiatives from the EU, USA and China that joined us in 2015, and are very pleased to further welcome two more major EU initiatives as well as one from Japan, and the EU Commission who will be telling us about how the EU supports international brain initiatives. We are also very excited to have a special session hosted by UBS on 'The Workforce of the Future' and hear from Google about 'Lessons from practical machine intelligence'. Finally, we have the return of the very well appreciated start-up competition offering opportunities for start-ups to advance and investors looking to invest in the solutions of the future", says Dr. El-Imad.

The Brain Forum was created because scientific exploration of the human brain is a fundamental tool for tackling the challenges of the 21st century. As more and more people are affected by neurological conditions, there is a growing awareness of the importance of brain research to healthcare and its wider applications. WHO recently concluded that brain disorders account for 35 per cent of the burden of all diseases in Europe and will become the major medical need of this century. In 2010, the European Brain Council published a report demonstrating that brain disorders cost Europe EUR 800 billion in 2010 – more than cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes combined.



Dr. El-Imad adds: “The future is both terrific and terrifying. Our aging populations are increasing the incidence and burden of many neurological and psychiatric diseases presenting huge challenges for healthcare and society, while artificial intelligence will presage a new industrial revolution, altering the workforce of the future and shifting further the balance of humans vs. machines. Technology and science will allow us to do things that we never imagined possible, but we as a society need to be prepared to deal with the consequences – good and bad – of our rapidly changing future.”

**For more information, please contact:**

The Brain Forum:  
Christophe Tournier, press office, +41 21 517 67 17, [thebrainforum@farner.ch](mailto:thebrainforum@farner.ch)

**About The Brain Forum – [thebrainforum.org](http://thebrainforum.org)**

The Brain Forum, first launched in 2013, brings together novel thinkers and pioneers in brain research, technology, healthcare and the economy. Researchers, engineers, healthcare professionals, entrepreneurs, industrialists, investors, funding agencies and policy makers will meet at The Brain Forum 2016, to advance our understanding of how the brain works and to accelerate the application and value of this knowledge in society and the economy.

**About EPFL – [www.epfl.ch](http://www.epfl.ch)**

Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, in Switzerland, is one of the most international higher education institutions in Europe. It counts among its ranks roughly 10,000 students and 5,000 employees representing more than 120 nationalities. Education and research are organized into five schools and two colleges, with a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary work. In 2013, the European Commission selected the Human Brain Project, an international effort at understanding the human brain, led by EPFL, as a “FET Flagship initiative”. The EPFL is also home to the Brain Mind Institute, which aims to understand the fundamental principles of brain function in health and disease, by using and developing unique experimental, theoretical, technological and computational approaches.

