



**World Conference
of Science Journalists**
Lausanne 2019



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Association suisse du journalisme scientifique
Swiss Association of Science Journalism



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Press release
San Francisco, 28 October 2017

Lausanne chosen to host 2019 World Conference of Science Journalists

On 28 October 2017 in San Francisco, the city of Lausanne was chosen to host the 11th World Conference of Science Journalists (WCSJ) from 1 to 5 July 2019 at the SwissTech Convention Center, on the campus of the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Lausanne (UNIL). Every two years, this gathering attracts over a thousand journalists and communicators of science representing more than 60 nationalities. Launched by the Swiss Association of Science Journalism (ASJS), soon to be joined by its sister organizations in France (AJSPI) and Italy (SWIM), the Lausanne candidacy won over the Board of Directors of the World Federation of Science Journalists, which oversees the conference series.

Following San Francisco in the United States in 2017 and Seoul in South Korea in 2015, the WCSJ returns to Europe after a six-year gap. In Lausanne, between 1000 and 1200 participants are expected to attend. For the first time, three science writers' associations joined forces to apply: the Swiss Association for Science Journalism, ASJS, the French Association of Science Journalists in the news media, AJSPI, and Science Writers in Italy, SWIM. "We are very honoured that Lausanne has been chosen to host this important event," said Olivier Dessibourg, President of the ASJS and initiator of the bid. "We put forward the vision of a conference organized by and for science journalists to present, defend and promote quality independent journalism in the media worldwide; an aspect that certainly helped us win." The motif chosen for the conference, "Reaching new heights in science journalism", uses the mountains shared by the three bidding countries as a symbol and common thread running through the event.

A rich programme

"The main program will give participants the opportunity to share good practice and reflect on the values of the profession of science journalism, it will also allow them to discover new tools and how to implement them," said Yves Sciamia, Vice President of the AJSPI. The conference will be built around original forms of presentation including creative workshops, mobile debates, brainstorming discussions and tutorials. "Longer-term projects, which will be launched before WCSJ 2019, will build closer links between communities of science writers around the world, one focusing on French-speaking science journalists, another on science writers in the Balkans," added Fabio Turone, President of SWIM.

The Lausanne candidacy has enjoyed the support of four major academic partners from the start: the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, CERN, and the Universities of Lausanne and Geneva. "We are very pleased to welcome the global community of science journalists to the EPFL/UNIL campus," said Pierre Vandergheynst, Vice President of EPFL. "Our campus's work is essential in providing the general public with a clear, responsible and healthy vision of scientific progress." Vandergheynst was present in San Francisco to support the bid. The four academic partners will offer a range of laboratory visits. "Science is vital in today's society," said Arnaud Marsollier, Head of Press at CERN. "More than ever, the world's major scientific challenges require a global effort, for which quality science journalism is vital. CERN is happy to support this initiative and to open its doors to journalists from around the

world attending WCSJ 2019." As well as visits to the partner institutions, some thirty other study tours will be organized, ranging from trips to alpine research stations to tours of many Swiss and European institutions easily accessible from Lausanne's central European location.

Academic, scientific, political and media support

In addition to academic and scientific support, the Lausanne candidacy also benefits from important backing from Swiss political, media and economic actors: the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation; Presence Switzerland; the City of Lausanne and the Canton of Vaud. European Institutions have also thrown their weight behind the bid, notably the European Commission, Euronews, the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), and institutions such as the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). "This conference is a unique opportunity for Switzerland to demonstrate to journalists from around the world that behind our famous mountains and chocolate lies a centre of scientific excellence," said Nicolas Bideau, Head of Presence Switzerland.

Many public and private actors have already given an undertaking to support the conference, notably the Bertarelli Foundation, which will become the main sponsor of the event. "Congratulations to the alpine team on its success," said Ernesto Bertarelli. "This is another demonstration of the Lake Geneva region's global standing in science, technology and engineering. I am proud, through the Bertarelli Foundation, to support this showcase of Swiss innovation, which will also share global knowledge and experience in science with our partners from all over the world." Gérald Howard of the Lausanne Montreux Congress bureau, which was involved in the organisation from the start, added: "The global visibility given to the Lausanne region through WCSJ 2019 and its participants will bring significant benefits for tourism and the local economy." "This conference is a unique opportunity for Switzerland to demonstrate to journalists from around the world that behind our famous mountains and chocolate lies a centre of scientific excellence," said Nicolas Bideau, Head of Presence Switzerland.

Almost half of the conference budget, estimated at 2.2 Million Swiss Francs (roughly 2 Million Euros) has already been secured.

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Further information:

The Franco-Italo-Swiss candidacy for the World Conference of Science Journalists 2019: www.wcsj2019.eu
Video of the climb to the summit of Mount Dolent (3,820 m), geographical meeting point of the three bidding countries, by journalists from the bid team:
<https://vimeo.com/238779805/44a6f20a8d>