

# AMERICAN SWISS FOUNDATION HOSTS CONVERSATION EXPLORING THE MYTH OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN OERLIKON

OERLIKON, SWITZERLAND, October 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Swiss Foundation hosted a conversation on “Exploring the Myth of Artificial Intelligence” with business and policy leaders in Zurich at the ETH AI Center on October 24, 2023.

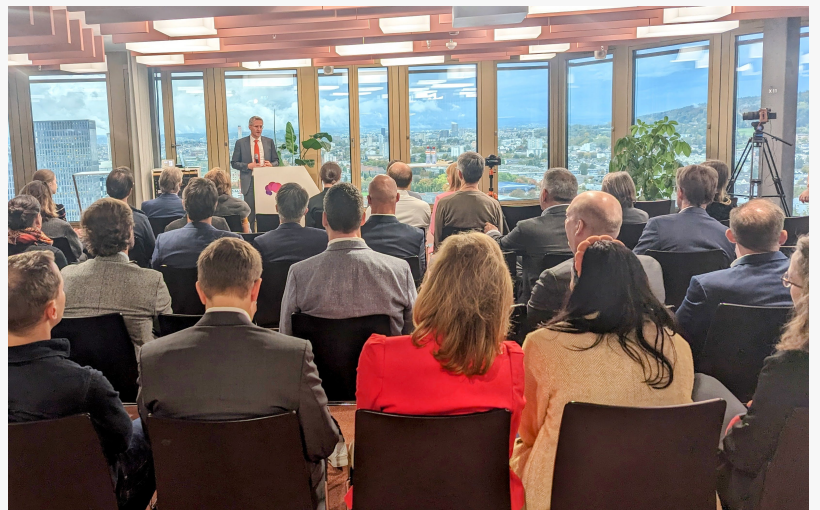
Erik J. Larson, Computer Scientist and Tech Entrepreneur and Author of “The Myth of Artificial Intelligence” (Harvard University Press, 2021) was the special guest and joined by Courtney Bowman, Global Director Privacy & Civil Liberties Engineering, Palantir Technologies (Young Leader 2021) who moderated the conversation. PD Dr. Alexander Ilic, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the ETH AI Center opened the program. Ueli Studer, General Counsel Switzerland, UBS Group Legal, Member of the Executive Committee of the Swiss Advisory Council, American Swiss Foundation, introduced the program.

Larson is a computer scientist and tech entrepreneur. The founder of two DARPA-funded AI startups, he is currently working on core issues in natural language processing and machine learning. He has written for The Atlantic and for professional journals and has tested the technical boundaries of artificial intelligence through his work with the IC2 tech incubator at the University of Texas at Austin. Larson writes for the Substack Colligo.

At the start of the program, ETH AI Center Co-Founder and Executive Director PD Dr. Alexander



ETH AI Center Co- Founder and Executive Director PD Dr. Alexander Ilic introduced the work of ETH Zurich’s AI Center.



Swiss Advisory Council Member Ueli Studer welcomed the audience.

Ilic introduced the work of ETH Zurich's AI Center, and shared: "At the ETH AI Center we are committed to AI research for the benefit of society. Therefore, this open conversation about artificial intelligence is of the utmost importance. AI's impact is growing every day and we need to study, understand and plan as a global community for the future together."

Swiss Advisory Council Member Ueli Studer welcomed the audience, and set the stage for the thought-provoking conversation that followed. He remarked: "It is a humbling point in time for me to give these introductory remarks for three different reasons:

geo-politics, technology and the US-Swiss relationship. Humbled by geopolitics having heard US president Joe Biden addressing his nation saying the world is at an inflection point in history and that the US should be seen as a beacon to it. Humbled by technology as it is tonight's topic and not my home turf. While I perceive us living with the impacts from the first three industrial revolutions – mechanization, mass production, and automation – we are currently experiencing the fourth, digitalization, but are probably unable to fully figure out the dimensions it might have. And, of course, humbled by U.S.-Swiss relations given the sheer magnitude, time in history, shared values and power of person-to-person exchanges it embodies."

Throughout the conversation, Larson critically examined artificial intelligence and its role in shaping the future. He explained, "AI works on inductive reasoning, crunching data sets to predict outcomes. Humans don't correlate data sets: we make conjectures informed by context and experience. Human intelligence is a web of best guesses, given what we know about the world. AI hype is both bad science and bad for science. A culture of invention thrives on exploring unknowns, not overselling existing methods. Inductive AI will continue to improve at narrow tasks, but if we want to make real progress, we will need to start by more fully appreciating the only true intelligence we know—our own."

Event moderator Courtney Bowman commented, "As a practitioner in the AI software industry, a student of philosophy, and someone deeply invested in understanding how technology both reflects and shapes society, "The Myth of Artificial Intelligence" is one of the first books I recommend to those seeking a clearer understanding of both AI's promises and limitations. It was therefore an honor to moderate the discussion with Erik J. Larson at this American Swiss Foundation event."



Event moderator Courtney Bowman asks a question to speaker Erik J. Larson.

The event was attended by distinguished members of both the Swiss and American communities, including business and industry leaders, policy makers, and members of the ETH academic community.

### About the American Swiss Foundation

Founded in 1945 in response to World War II, the Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders. Towards the end of the 20th century, two former U.S. Ambassadors to Switzerland, Shelby Cullom Davis and Faith Whittlesey, ushered in a new era for the small organization. They ultimately transformed the Foundation from an organization that was primarily social to one that focused on nurturing and investing in the next generation of leaders in both countries.

In 1975, Ambassador Davis assumed an active leadership role with the Foundation. He served as chairman and president until 1989, and as honorary chairman until his passing in 1994. In 1989, Ambassador Whittlesey became chairman and president of the Foundation and launched the organization's flagship program, the Young Leaders Conference.

Today, alumni of the conference number more than 1,400 leaders who shape the futures of the two countries, including members of U.S. Congress and Swiss parliamentarians, entrepreneurs and business executives, media professionals, and public policy experts. The American Swiss Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders through inspirational programs to strengthen the shared values of liberty, the rule of law, and free enterprise.

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