



## Press Release

### **Thomas Gfeller named new CEO of the Foundation Switzerland Innovation**

Bern, September 20, 2023

**Since its founding, Raymond Cron has successfully led the foundation Switzerland Innovation, as its CEO. As of March 1, 2024, he will leave the foundation to focus on his other mandates. The Foundation Board Committee has selected Thomas Gfeller as the new CEO. As a member of the Foundation Board and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Biel/Bienne site, Gfeller knows the Switzerland Innovation network very well. The Foundation Board Committee strongly believes that Thomas Gfeller will lead the foundation successfully into the future.**

Raymond Cron has successfully led the foundation Switzerland Innovation since it was founded in 2015. As its first CEO, he has effectively built up and expanded the network and ecosystem of Switzerland Innovation. With its 16 sites and parks in Basel, Biel, Lausanne, St. Gallen, Villigen (AG) and Zurich, Switzerland Innovation plays a pivotal role in the Swiss innovation landscape. The Foundation Board Committee (FBC) would like to express its deepest thanks to Raymond Cron for his tireless efforts. Starting from March 1, 2024, Raymond Cron will shift his focus to his various Board of Directors mandates. For this reason, he will step down from his position as CEO of the foundation at that time. A nomination committee appointed by the FBC, initiated a professional search process to find his successor. The committee received support from a HR consulting firm in this endeavor. The process identified approximately 30 long-listed candidates from both German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland. Initial discussions were held with 12 short-listed candidates. This was followed by a second interview and an integrated brief assessment with six of the candidates. Based on the results of this process, at the nomination committee's request, the FBC unanimously selected Thomas Gfeller as the new CEO, effective March 1, 2024.

Thomas Gfeller (52) has served as a professional board of directors' member across various companies, with a focus on the industrial sector. He also serves as the Economic Delegate for the city of Biel on a part-time basis (responsible for location and business development). With a doctorate in philosophy and economics, he began his professional career in association management, followed by an international position as a consultant for the American strategy consulting firm Bain & Company. In the course of his many years as an Economic Delegate for the city of Biel, he worked with various stakeholders from the worlds of politics and business to set up Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne AG (SIPBB AG), which was able to move into its new building in 2021. He has served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of SIPBB AG since its founding and represents the company on the Switzerland Innovation Foundation Board.

He will resign from his mandates as a member of the Board of Directors of SIPBB AG and as a member of the Foundation Board of Switzerland Innovation no later than the date of commencement of his duties as CEO of Switzerland Innovation. The same applies to his role as Economic Delegate for the city of Biel.



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He will continue his work as a member of the Board of Directors focusing on innovative companies in the industrial sector. Like the previous CEO Raymond Cron, he will work at Switzerland Innovation on a 60% basis.

Thomas Gfeller impressed the FBC with his analytical mindset, clear communication, his experience in industry and the public sector and his communication skills. He also has a very clear vision for the successful further development of the foundation and its network. In view of these qualities, the FBC strongly believes that Thomas Gfeller is the right CEO for the future.

### **Contact for more information:**

Andreas Rickenbacher, President of the Foundation Board. Telephone: 031 350 51 40 (available on September 20, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.).

### **About Switzerland Innovation**

Switzerland Innovation is a network of six innovation parks at a total of 16 sites across Switzerland based on a joint initiative between public institutions, academia and the private sector with a statutory mandate from the Swiss Federal Council. Switzerland Innovation forms an ecosystem that allows universities and innovative companies to collaborate and use their knowledge and research results for the development of new, marketable products and services. [www.switzerland-innovation.com](http://www.switzerland-innovation.com)