



Press release

Date: 04.03.2022

Science diplomacy: Federal Council continues to support GESDA Foundation after successful pilot phase

At its meeting on 4 March 2022, the Federal Council decided to extend the mandate of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) Foundation by ten years and to maintain its financial support for the Foundation. After a three-year pilot phase, the Foundation has carved out its profile in International Geneva as an important global governance player. GESDA identifies trends in science and technology, evaluates their impact on and potential for people, society and the planet, and reinforces Geneva as a vector enabling exchange among all actors of the international community.

The world is facing rapid scientific and technological progress. Many advances have the potential to transform humanity and how it interacts with the planet. The international community must act with foresight in order to preserve its scope for action and strengthen its capacity to shape the future. In 2019, these considerations led the Federal Council to establish, together with the State Council of the Canton of Geneva and supported by the City of Geneva, the GESDA Foundation. The mission of the Foundation is to identify and harness the opportunities and challenges of progress. The Foundation serves as an instrument used to develop approaches to tackling the current and emerging challenges facing humanity.

Successful pilot phase

After its three-year pilot phase, the Foundation is now picking up speed. The Federal Council, as one of the founders, has agreed to extend its mandate until 2032. The federal authorities will provide GESDA with CHF 3 million each year for ten years, starting in 2023. This amount covers just under one third of the Foundation's budgeted basic costs. The decision by the State Council of the Canton of Geneva is pending. Since its inception, GESDA has succeeded in becoming an important player in International Geneva. The Foundation's work pursues three priorities:

- Science Anticipation: here, GESDA publishes an annual Scientific Breakthrough Radar report that describes trends in science and technology that could have a major impact on people, societies and life on Earth. Over 500 Swiss and international scientists worked together to draw up the first Radar, which was published in autumn 2021.
- Diplomacy Acceleration: Guided by the Radar's findings, GESDA promotes dialogue among key stakeholders working in diplomacy, science, international organisations,



business and philanthropy, and civil society. The first GESDA Summit was held in early October 2021 and was attended by over 900 people from around the globe.

- Implementation: through science anticipation and the impartial and fact-driven facilitation of discussions between science and diplomacy, GESDA supports the development of specific and effective solutions promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals. GESDA also pursues this goal through its own projects, such as the GESDA-XPRIZE Quantum competition.

Added value for Switzerland

In its role as host state, Switzerland strives to bolster International Geneva as a neutral platform for dialogue and the development of joint solutions to global challenges. GESDA is helping to establish Geneva as a hub for science diplomacy. Through its Radar and annual Summit, the Foundation has been boosting the visibility of International Geneva beyond the traditional spheres of international governance such as NGOs and the UN – and specifically in the scientific community. Moreover, by involving stakeholders working in science, diplomacy, the private sector, philanthropy and civil society, GESDA is breathing new life into the way multilateralism works. With its anticipatory science diplomacy, Switzerland is connecting science and diplomacy with each other early on, thereby providing the international community with an innovative and effective approach to dealing with global issues.

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