

# FemSpin

## Promoting spin-off activities of female academics

This collaborative project of the Federal Institutes of Technology at Zurich (ETHZ) and Lausanne (EPFL), the Paul Scherrer Institute, the Universities of Zurich, Basel, Bern and Geneva, as well as the Swiss universities of applied sciences in Western (HES-SO), Southern (SUPSI) and Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) aims at promoting equal opportunities in the field of spin-off activities by setting a specific focus on women.

### Why is female entrepreneurship important?

Involving women in innovation and start-ups is crucial from different perspectives. It ensures diverse perspectives, enhancing creativity and problem-solving capabilities within teams. It promotes economic growth by tapping into a broader talent pool. Women entrepreneurs often tackle unique challenges, bringing innovative solutions to market. Women-led startups often prioritize social and community impact, contributing to the overall development and well-being of society. Their involvement not only drives innovation but also fosters inclusivity and gender equality.

### Status quo

Share of women in Swiss start-ups and spin-offs founded at Swiss universities and academic institutions reached only 17% in 2021 (FEM REPORT 2023). This correlates with the average European data of 16,9% according to the FEM REPORT 2023, yet Switzerland as one of the world's most innovative countries should be leading by example. Moreover only 3% of invested capital in Europe was received by start-ups with female CEOs, according to Startupticker 2023

### Reasons

In Switzerland, like in many other countries, women face several challenges when setting up startups or spin-offs, including:

- **Gender Bias:** Women often encounter bias and stereotypes in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including perceptions that they are less capable or committed. This can affect access to funding, networks, mentorship, making it harder to succeed.
- **Access to Funding:** Women entrepreneurs in Switzerland may struggle to secure adequate funding for their startups. This can hinder the growth and scalability of women-owned businesses.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Women in Switzerland may face barriers to networking or a lack of visibility in the entrepreneurial community.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Balancing entrepreneurship with family responsibilities can be particularly challenging for women, especially in a country like Switzerland where traditional gender roles are still prevalent.
- **Cultural and Institutional Barriers:** There may be a lack of support for women in STEM fields or a scarcity of role models and resources specifically tailored to female entrepreneurs.

### Events and promotion activities

#### News & Events

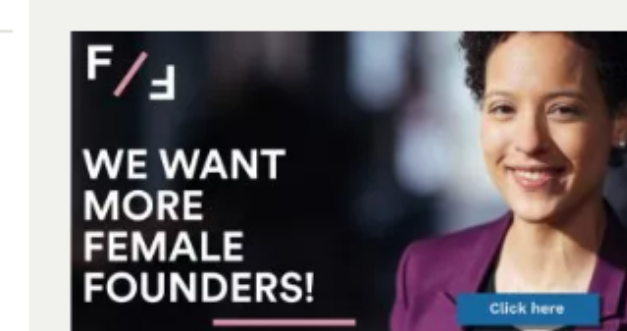
Navigating Unseen Roads:  
Exploring the Impact of Bias on  
Academic Women's Career  
Trajectories



#### CONNECT – Connecting Women's Careers in Academia and Industry

CONNECT encourages women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to plan and develop their career. It aims to inspire all involved people to bridge the gap between academia, industry and public sector.

Navigating Networking and  
Building Alliances for Female  
Founders



#### Female Founders

The Female Founders Initiative by STARTUP CAMPUS, ZHAW and Impact Hub Zurich aims to inspire, inform and support women to become founders and entrepreneurs. The Female Founders map provides transparency in the sector and portrays great female role models in the startup ecosystem.

The Female Entrepreneur  
Experience: Wisdom and  
Innovation

#### Publication

FEM REPORT 2023  
by FEMtrepreneurs



#### feminno – female innovation and career development in Life Sciences

feminno offers all female scientists (from life sciences, natural sciences, medicine, health and tech) the opportunity to bridge research from an academic perspective with innovation, entrepreneurship and industry. The program is supported by University of Zurich and ETH Zurich, and industry partners.

FEMSPIN Report 2023  
by Brigitte Liebig and Alain Soltermann



#### FEMtrepreneurs

This grass-roots initiative by the University of Basel has the main goal of creating a supporting community centered around supporting female entrepreneurs in their innovative endeavors and enabling their development in founding their businesses.

Policy briefing female entrepreneurship

### Success stories



„The tech world needs these special skills that only we women have. We think more broadly, consider more influencing factors.“

Virginia Hess, Director Dedomena

A startup from the University of Basel



“Trust yourself, don't underestimate yourself or think you don't have the skills.“

Aude Ambrosini, CO-Director Klode

A HES-SO start-up

### Project Partners

