



Universität
Zürich^{UZH}

Innovation Hub

Transformative Power: Creating Impact by Sparking Innovation

UZH Innovation Hub | Annual Report 2025



Foreword

Innovation does not happen by chance.

It requires people with the courage to explore new ideas, the capabilities to develop them, and an environment in which they can thrive. At the UZH Innovation Hub, our role is to create these conditions – across the full disciplinary diversity of the University of Zurich (UZH) and beyond.

During 2025, we took several important steps to strengthen these foundations. With the approval of the Minor in Innovation & Entrepreneurship, UZH took a major step towards establishing its first interdisciplinary Master's program in innovation and entrepreneurship, open to students from all faculties. We also launched the Entrepreneurial Skills Workshop Series for PhDs and postdocs, developed together with the Graduate Campus. We expanded our venture creation support through the Market Validation Lab and initiated the world's first Starlab Hackathon, bringing together researchers,

students, and industry partners to explore concepts for future space stations.

Innovation is a collaborative endeavour. Across UZH, many initiatives strengthen the university's innovation landscape. For example, UZH Space Hub laid the foundation for the Center for Space and Aviation Switzerland and Liechtenstein (CSA), whose current partnerships – including Starlab Space and Space Florida – help position Zurich as an international hub for the New Space Economy. Together, these initiatives demonstrate what becomes possible through collaboration across disciplines, organizations, and sectors.

None of these achievements would be possible without the commitment of students, researchers, colleagues, partners and supporters. Thank you for being part of this journey. We look forward to continuing to shape the future of innovation at UZH together.



Maria Olivares

Dr. Maria Olivares, Head Innovation

Transformative Power of the University of Zurich

UZH has always been a place where knowledge changes the world.

Scientific discovery, innovation, and real-world impact has defined UZH for generations – from the pioneering work of Wilhelm Röntgen and Albert Einstein to today's researchers advancing knowledge across all disciplines. This rich living tradition is not a coincidence – it is the result of a university that stands for the power of curiosity, rigor, and the courage to think beyond boundaries.

With more than 23,000 students, 5,500 doctoral candidates, over 6,000 academic faculty members and professors, seven faculties and over 150 institutes, UZH is Switzerland's largest and most diverse university. As a leading, globally oriented research university, UZH combines excellence across a broad range of disciplines with a strong commitment to

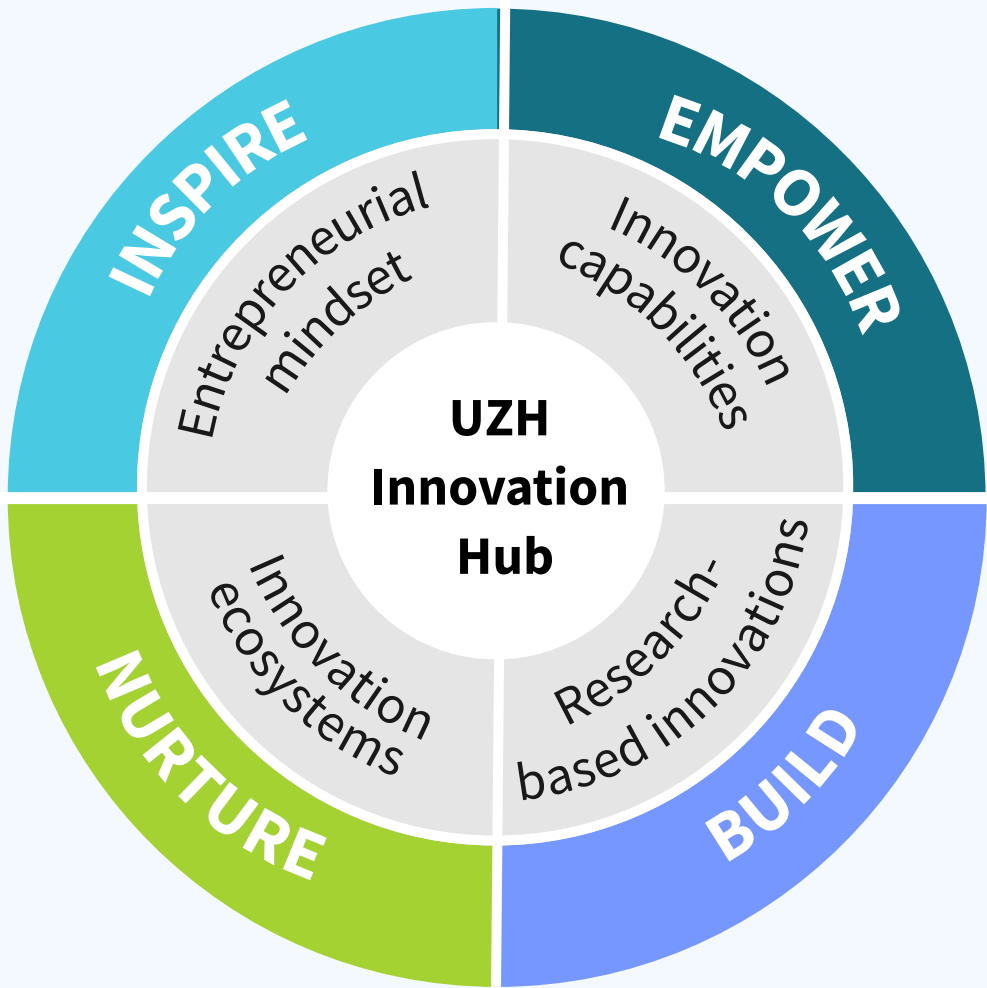
collaboration, openness and societal relevance. This diversity creates extraordinary potential for innovation.

Today, the challenges facing society demand more than excellent research alone. Real long-term solutions require the ability to connect knowledge across disciplines, going beyond the boundaries of established ways of thinking. It is at these intersections where opportunities exist to combine different perspectives and knowledge in unexpected ways to create meaningful impact.

This is where the UZH Innovation Hub comes in.

We help transform this potential into innovation and meaningful impact for society and the economy – inspiring entrepreneurial thinking,

empowering people with innovation capabilities, building concrete pathways for research to make a real difference, and nurturing the ecosystem that enables new ideas to thrive.

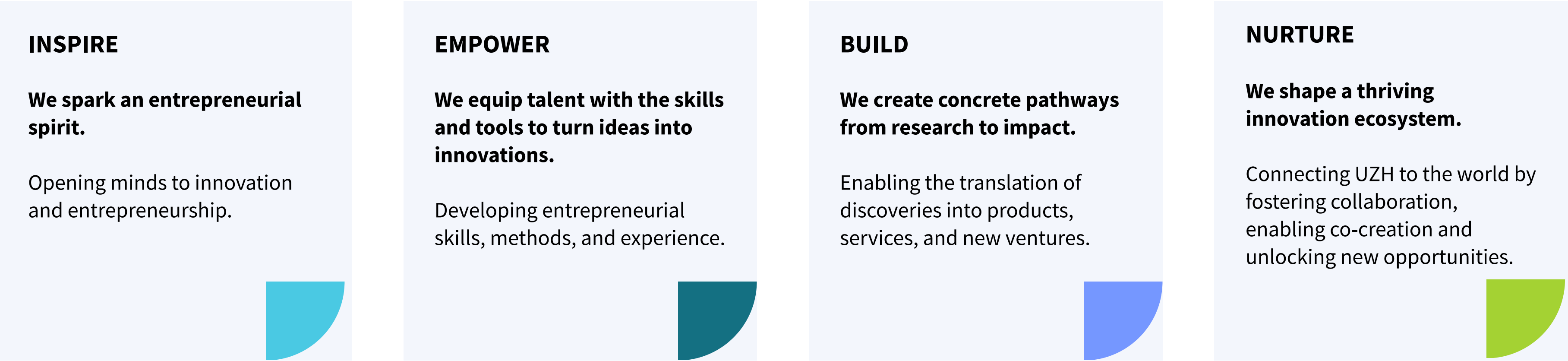


UZH Innovation Hub – Mission & Core functions

Our Mission

We empower curious minds to translate ideas into real-world impact through the full disciplinary diversity of UZH.

We do this through four interconnected core functions:



UZH Innovation Hub

Bringing together a strong network of internal and external partners who actively contribute to innovation at UZH.

UZH & BEYOND

A broad network of institutions and communities creating opportunities and impact.

- Researchers & Students
- Alumni
- Startups & Entrepreneurs
- Industry, Corporates, Non-for-Profits
- Public Sector & Policy Makers
- Investors & Foundations
- Innovation Park Zurich, BioTechnopark, Technopark, Blue Lion
- University Hospitals

UZH INNOVATION PARTNERS

Collaborating with ambitious actors at UZH to drive innovation in teaching and research.

- Researchers
- School for Transdisciplinary Studies, BioEntrepreneurship & Innovation Program, Graduate Campus
- Translational Medicine Accelerator, UZH.ai, ZH3D, Technology Platforms
- Unitectra (Technology Transfer Office)
- Digital Society Initiative (DSI)

STRATEGIC BOARDS

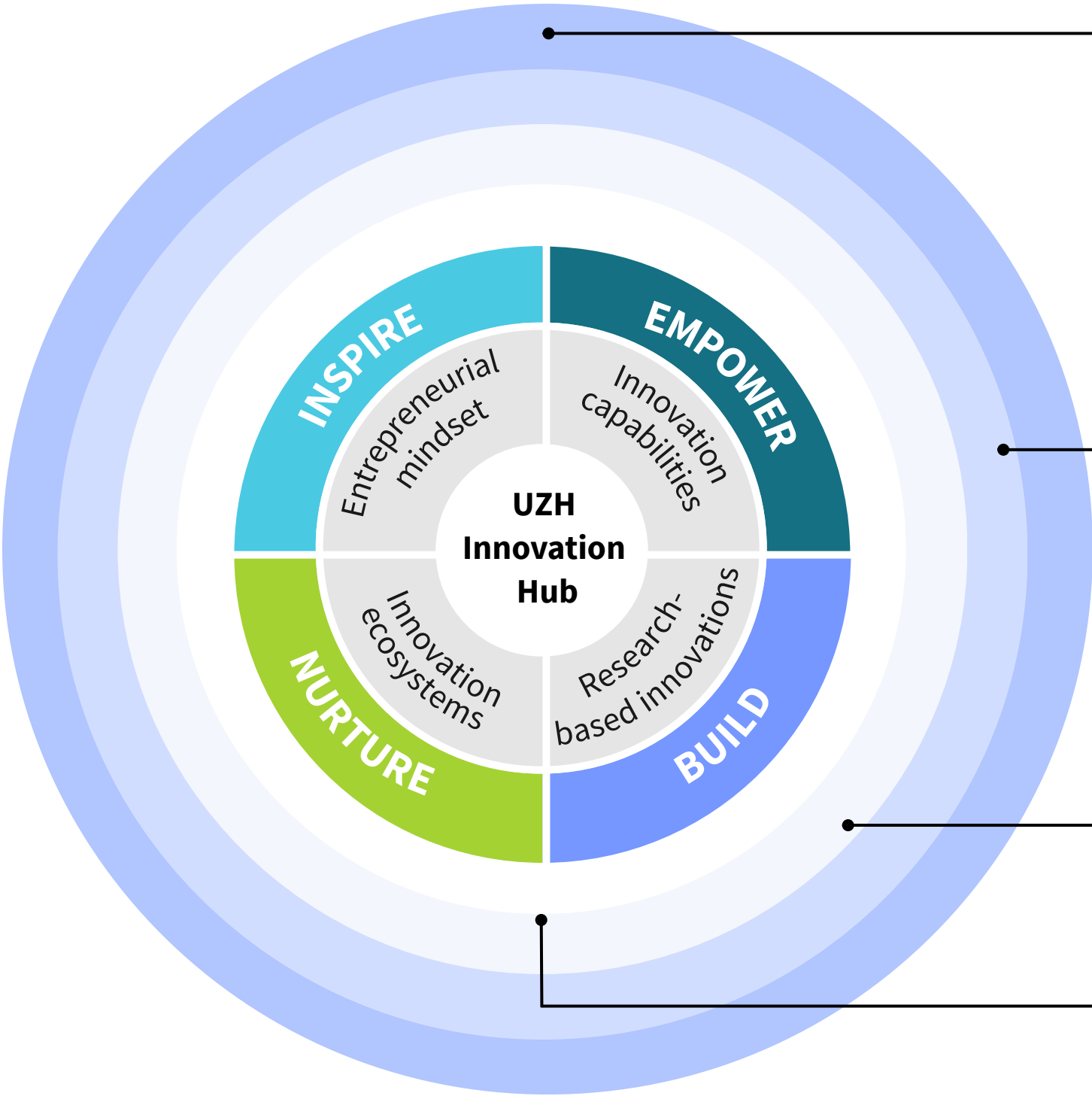
Providing expertise, reflection and advice to strengthen our innovation ecosystem and support programs.

- Innovation Council
- Innovation Ambassadors

PRIORITIES

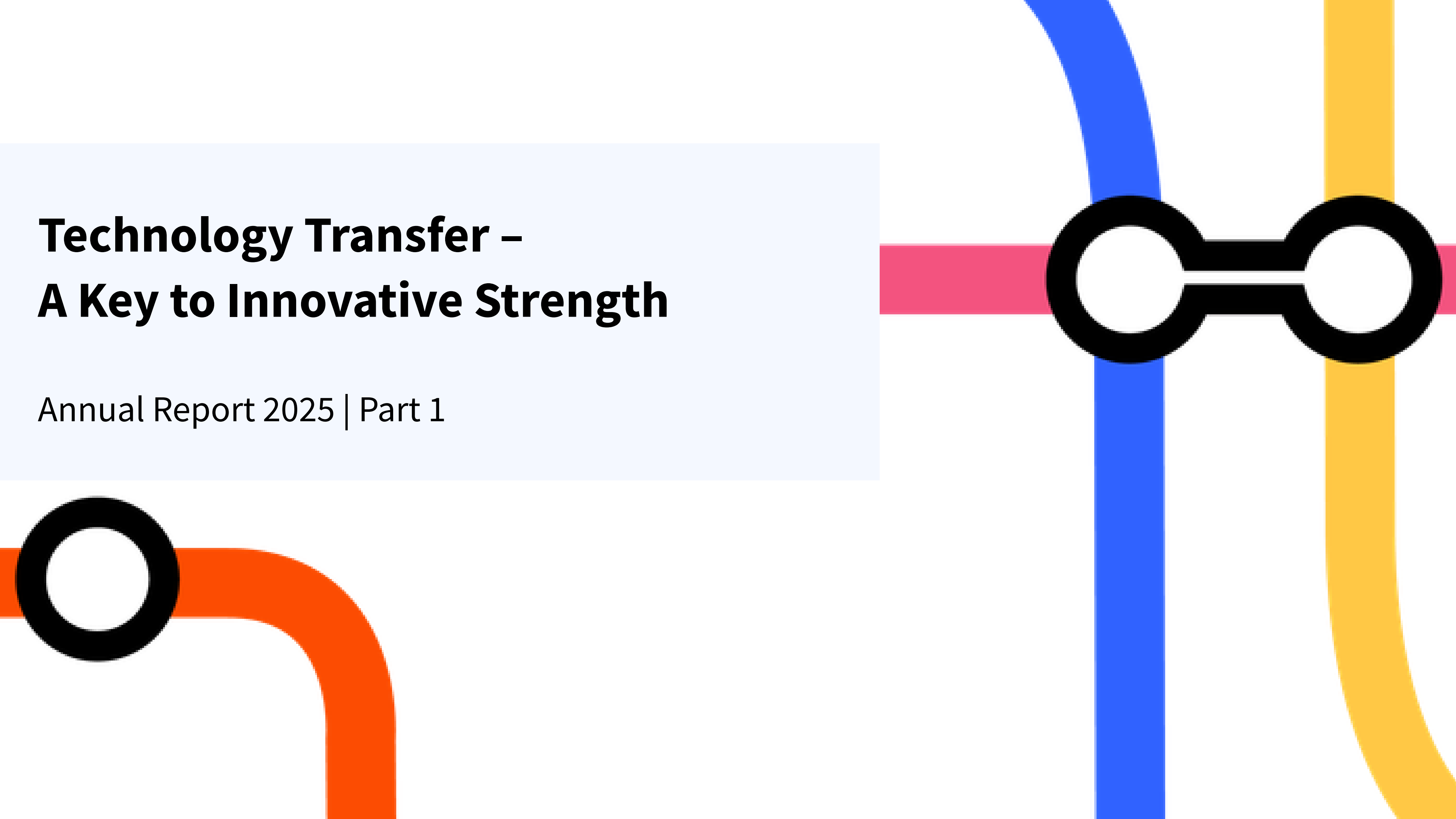
Strategic focus areas where UZH's research excellence translates into innovation for society and the economy.

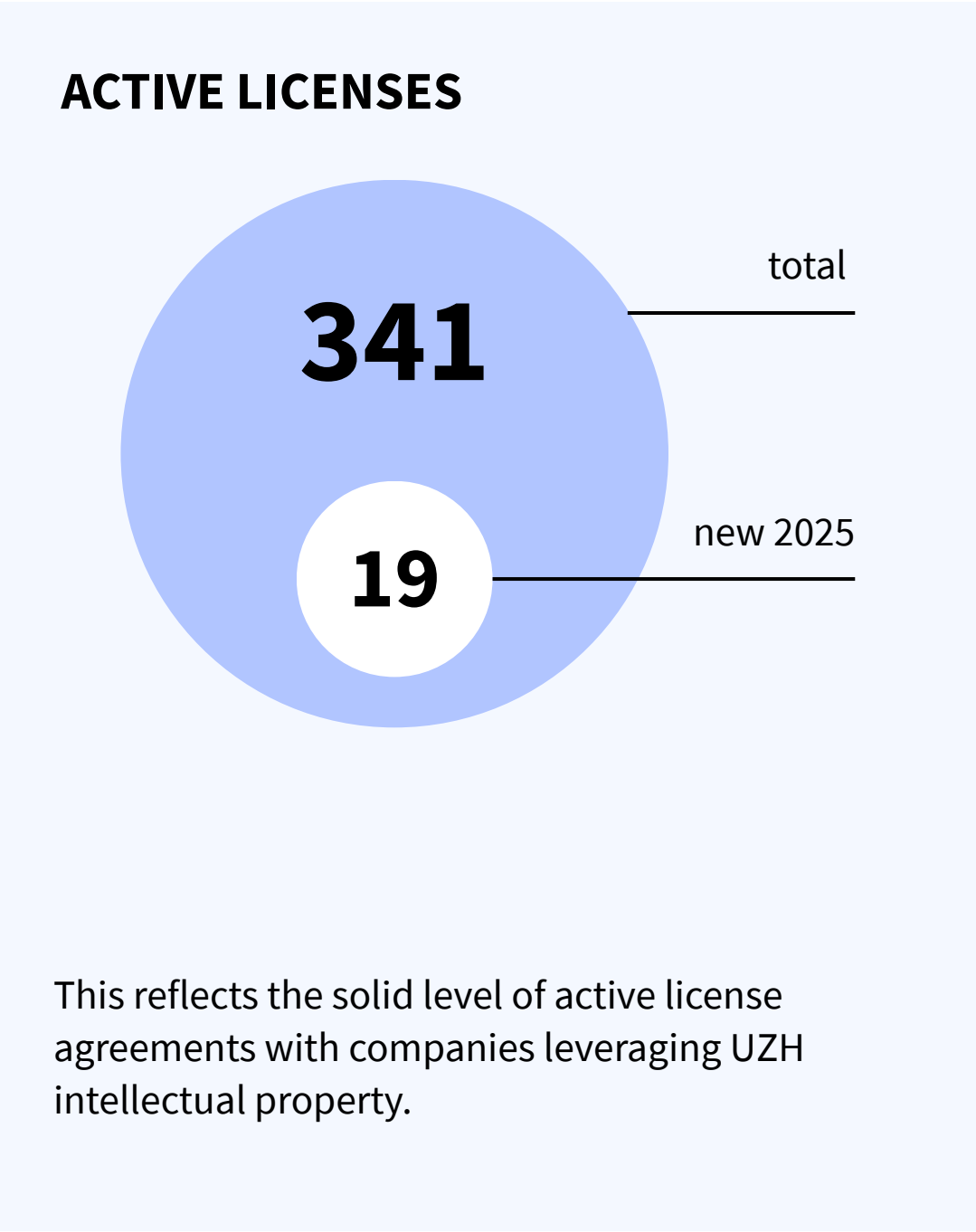
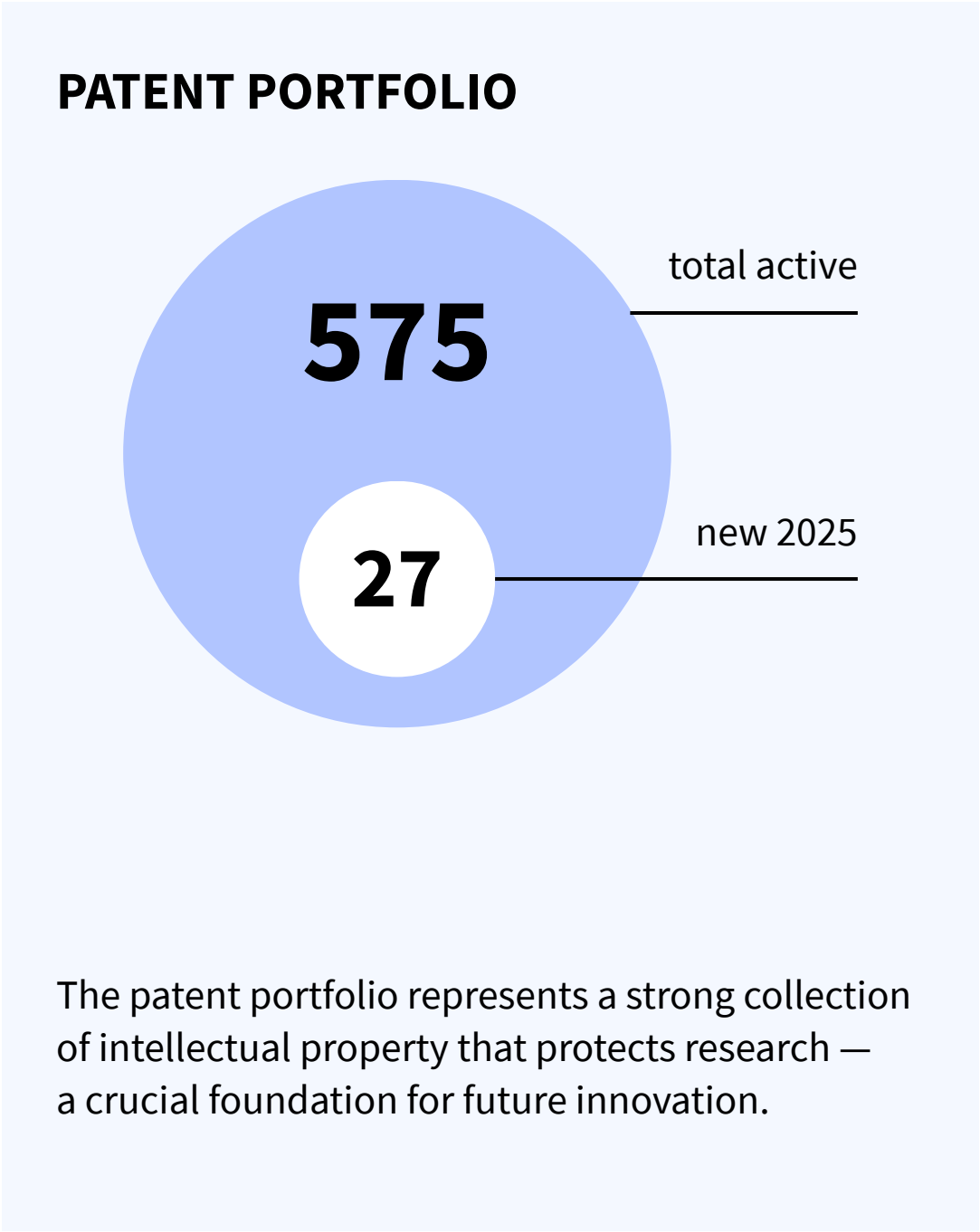
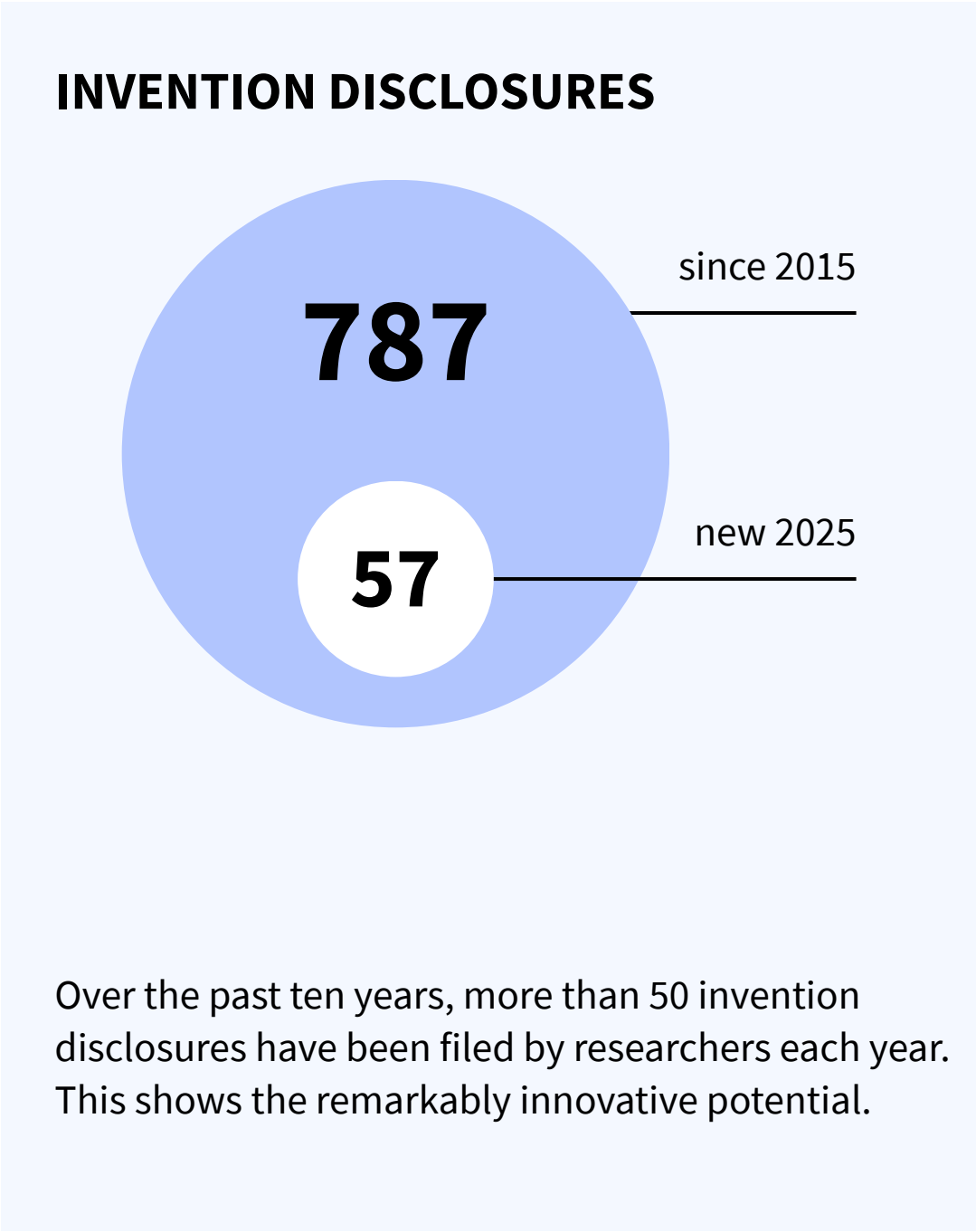
- Life Sciences
- Digital Innovation
- Space & Aviation
- Sustainable Society



Technology Transfer – A Key to Innovative Strength

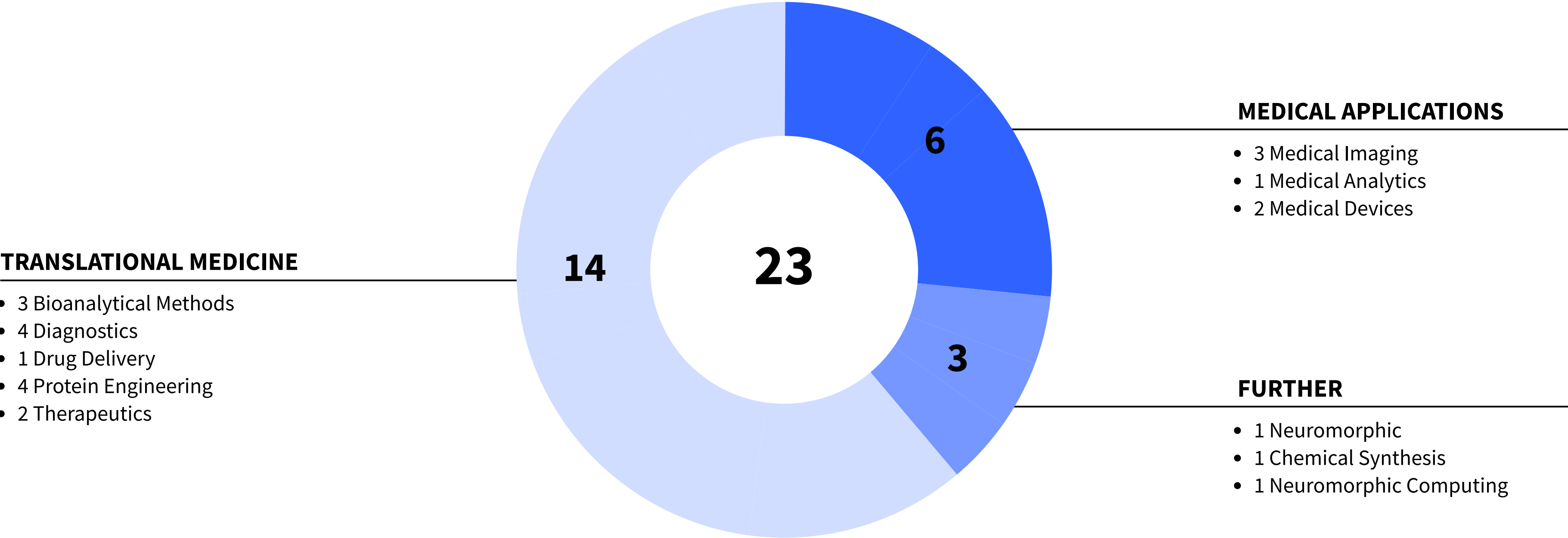
Annual Report 2025 | Part 1



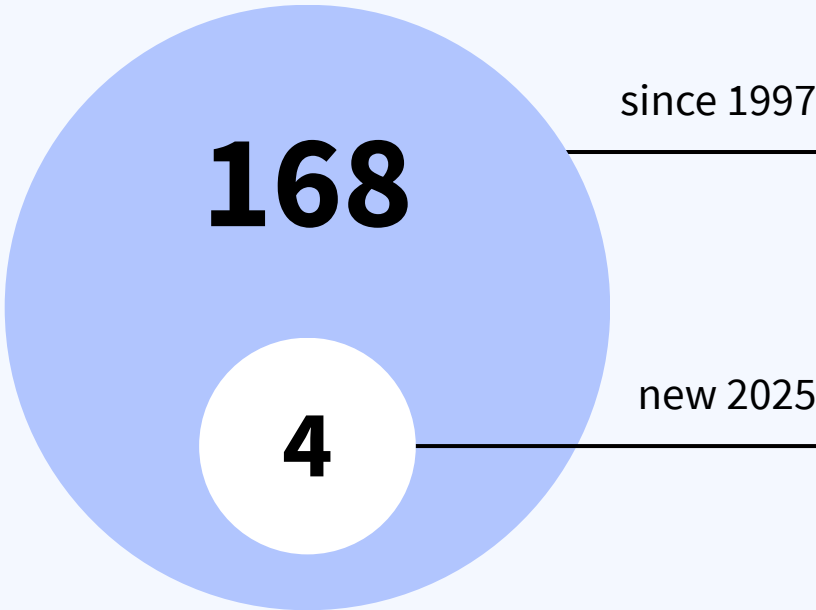


All figures provided by Unitectra

Patent Areas



SPIN-OFFS CREATED



The creation of Spin-offs is one important pathway for transferring inventions into society.

FUNDING RAISED

94,6

million CHF (2025)

Private investments into UZH Spin-offs, including venture capital and angel funding (excl. grants and research funding).

EXIT RATE

19%

since 1999

The exit rate refers to those UZH Spin-offs who have either sold their company or went through an Initial Public Offering (IPO).



EVIIVE

Decision-making aids for cancer therapies

EVIIVE is on a mission to transform the treatment selection of cancer through innovative extracellular vesicle biomarker discovery platforms, IMPASS & IMPACT.

Founders:
Kevin Yim, Richard Chahwan

- BioTech
- MedTech
- Digital Innovation

EX3D

Measuring bulging eyes using a smartphone

EX3D is developing an app that uses smartphone cameras to create a three-dimensional model of the face and to precisely measure the eyeballs. An important measurement for diagnosing and monitoring the treatment of Graves’ disease and other conditions, such as tumors or vascular malformations.

Founder:
Konrad Weber

NERAI BIOSCIENCE

Genetic healing with high-tech procedures

By harnessing the most advanced CRISPR and protein engineering technologies, Neraï develops tailor-made, highly precise, and personalized genome editors at scale, addressing previously unreachable diseases and rewriting the rules of therapeutic genome editing.

Founders:
Kim Marquart, Lukas Schmidheini, Gerald Schwank

NEURODAIGNOSTICS

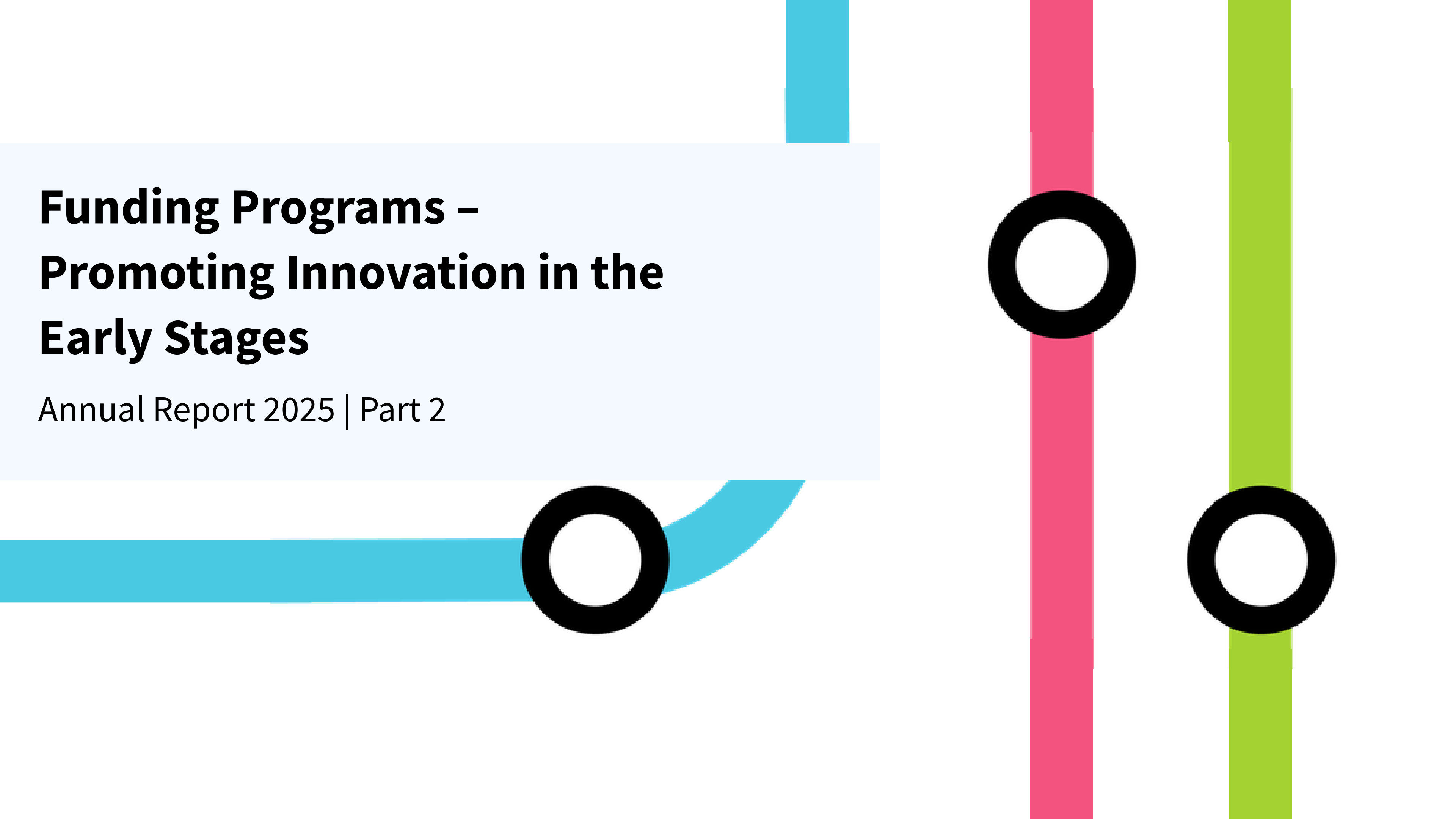
Cognitive testing with AI

neurodAlgnostics use artificial intelligence to simplify the administration of traditional cognitive tests for neuropsychologists. For diagnoses on a wide range of neurological and psychiatric conditions, such as dementia or ADHD.

Founders:
Perrine Lhuillier, Nicolas Langer

Spin-off Success 2025 (excerpt)

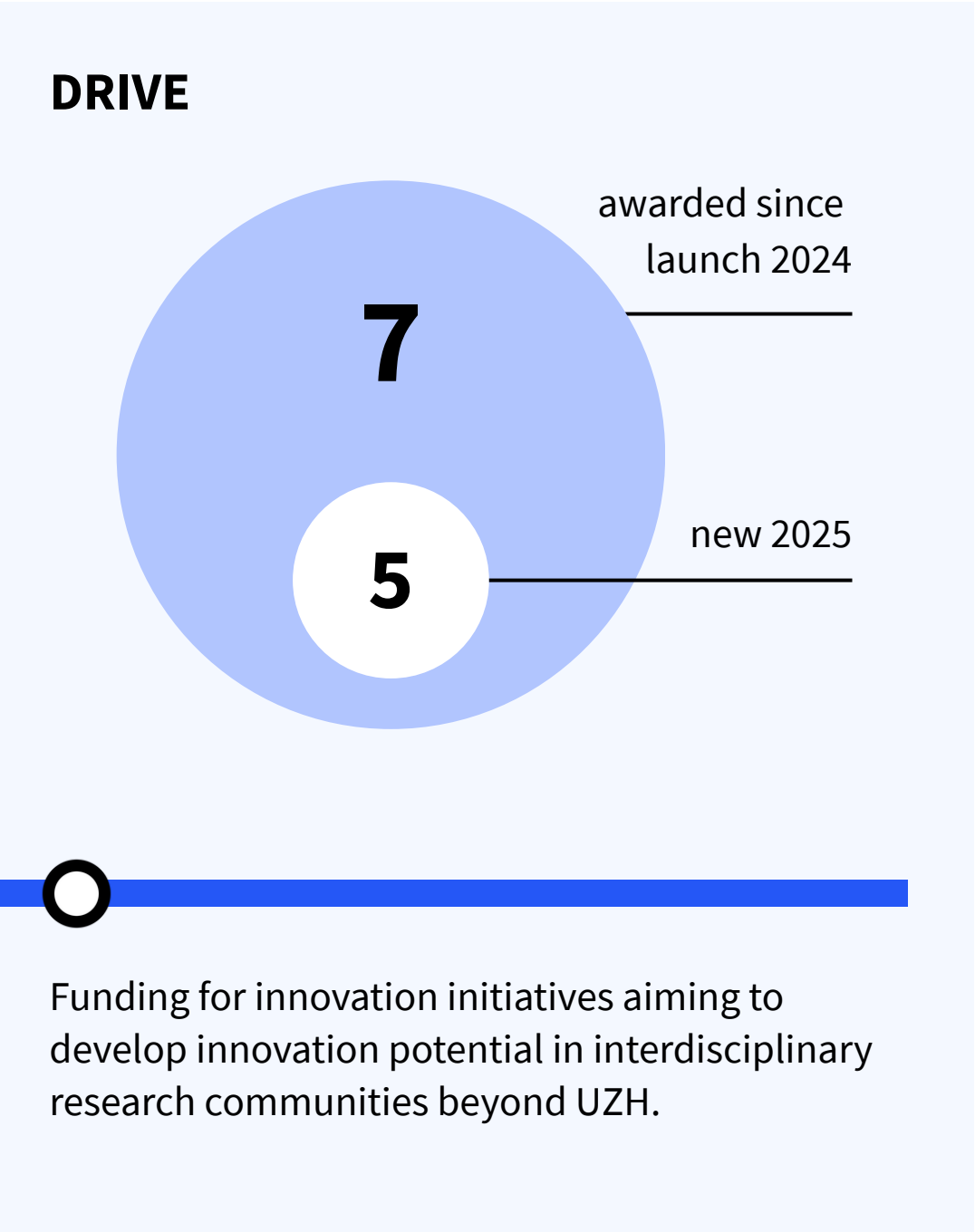
METALEAD 1 mio CHF support from the UZH Life Science Fund metaLead is a pioneer in the development of new drugs to treat metal-related diseases, such as Wilson’s disease and lead poisoning.	ASKEARTH 2,26 mio CHF led by 42CAP With an intuitive search engine for satellite data, askEarth is putting Earth observation at the fingertips of the public.	RECONNECT LABS 22 mio CHF in funding Reconnect Labs brings groundbreaking therapies for neuropsychiatric disorders to patients.	CUTISS 56 mio CHF in a Series C financing round CUTISS is a leader in the fields of tissue therapy and regenerative medicine, providing the only living, true human skin on demand.	ONCOBIT 1,9 mio CHF in financing round Oncobit is a precision oncology company developing next-generation cancer monitoring solutions.	TOP 100 SWISS STARTUP 2025 8 UZH Spin-offs in the top 100 ranking • Apricot • EraCal • FimmCyte • InCephalo • metaLead • MUVON • Navignostics • Neraï
--	--	--	--	---	--



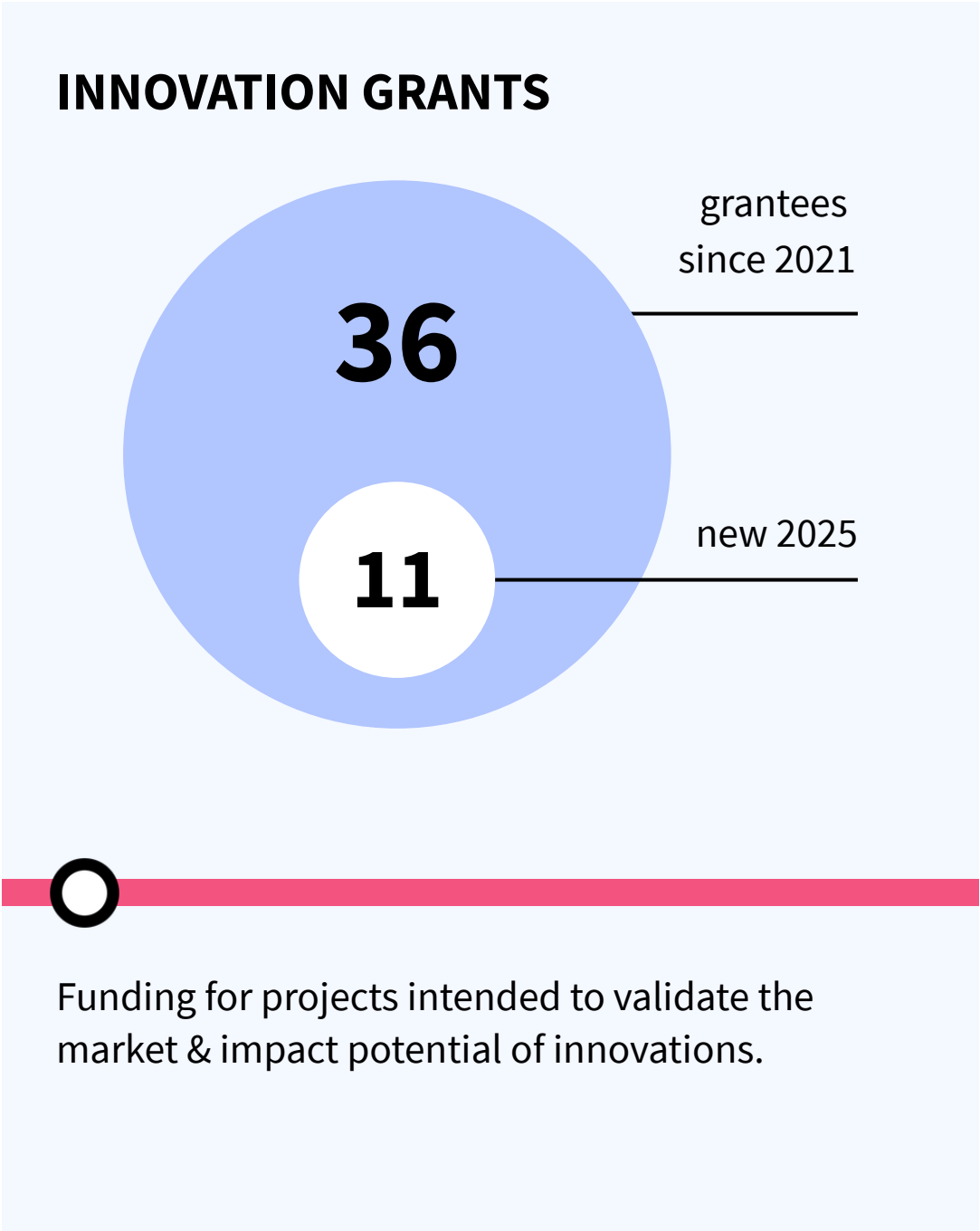
Funding Programs – Promoting Innovation in the Early Stages

Annual Report 2025 | Part 2

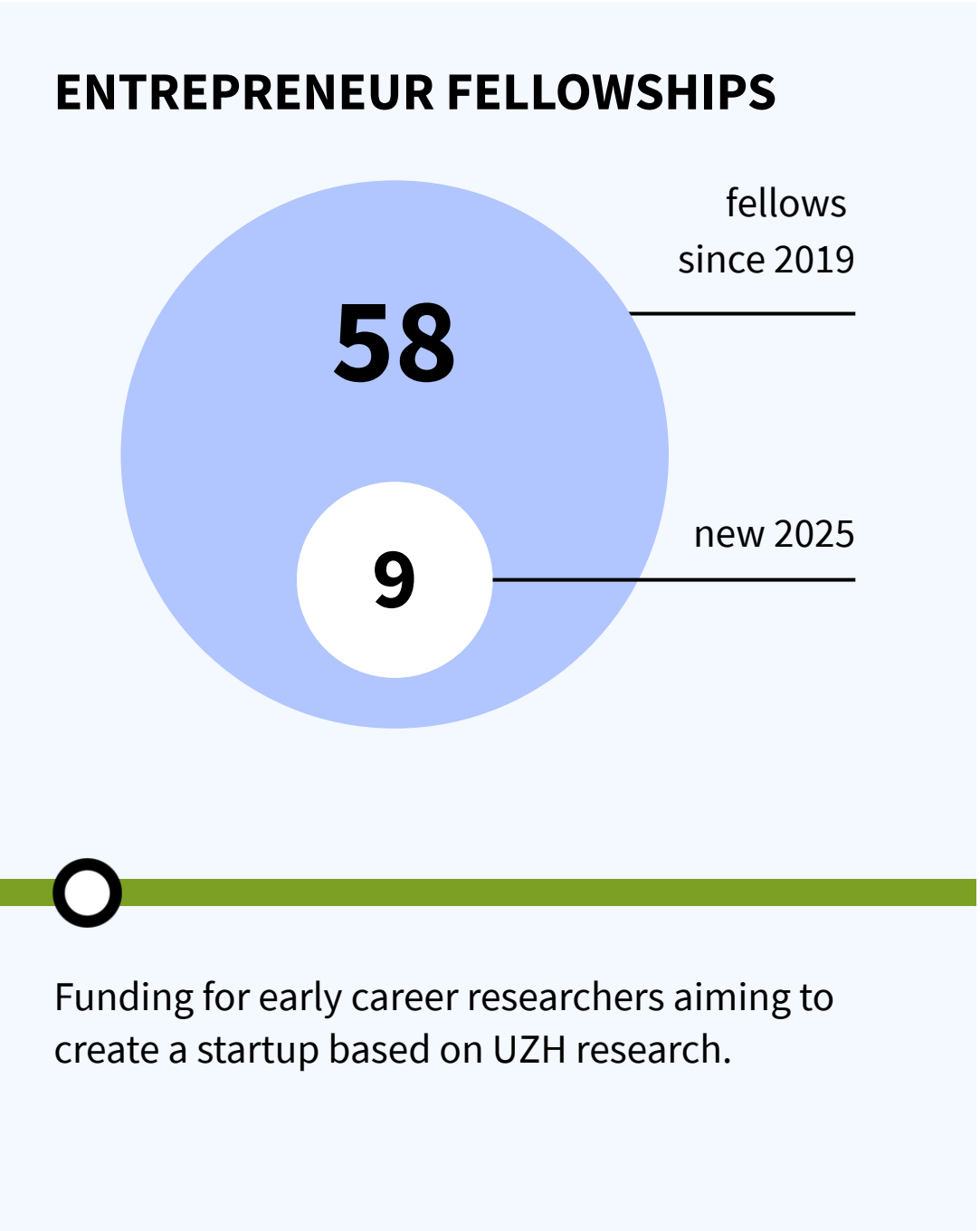
UZH Innovation Hub – Innovation Support Programs



Funding for structural initiatives



Funding for individuals



Funding for individuals

DRIVE – Initiatives Funded in 2025

The MedTwins Hub

National platform with virtual patient models (“digital twins”) in musculoskeletal medicine.

Initiative Lead: Sebastiano Caprara Digital Medicine Unit, Balgrist Campus



UZH.ai Fellowship

Builds bridge between academia and industry through co-mentored PhD/Postdoc positions.

Initiative Lead: Ruben Kranendonk Strategic Projects, UZH.ai



UZH Space

A university-wide platform that unites researchers, students and industry partners to foster space-related activities accross diciplines.

Initiative Lead: Ravid Helled Departartment of Astrophysics



AI + Environment Summit

One-day event to explore how AI can drive positive environmental impact, addressing researchers, industry leaders and policymakers.

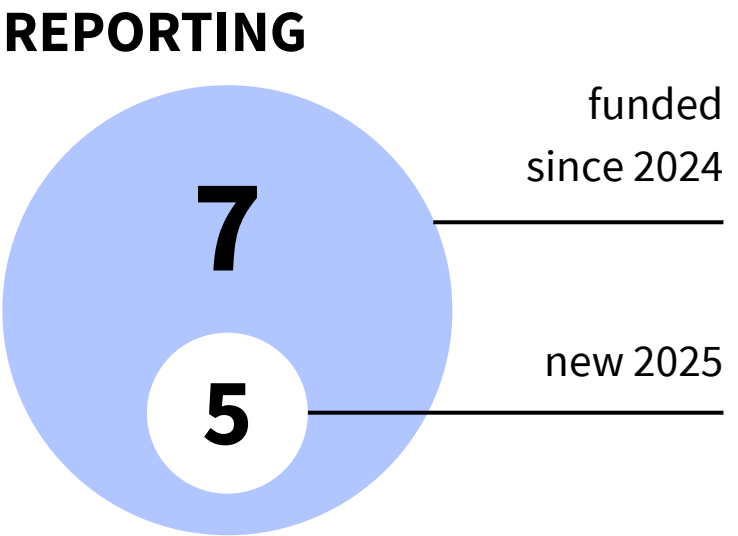
Initiative Lead: Johannes Dollinger Department of Mathematical Modeling and Machine Learning



BEST.RI

Community ensuring societal values and ethics in new technologies and innovations.

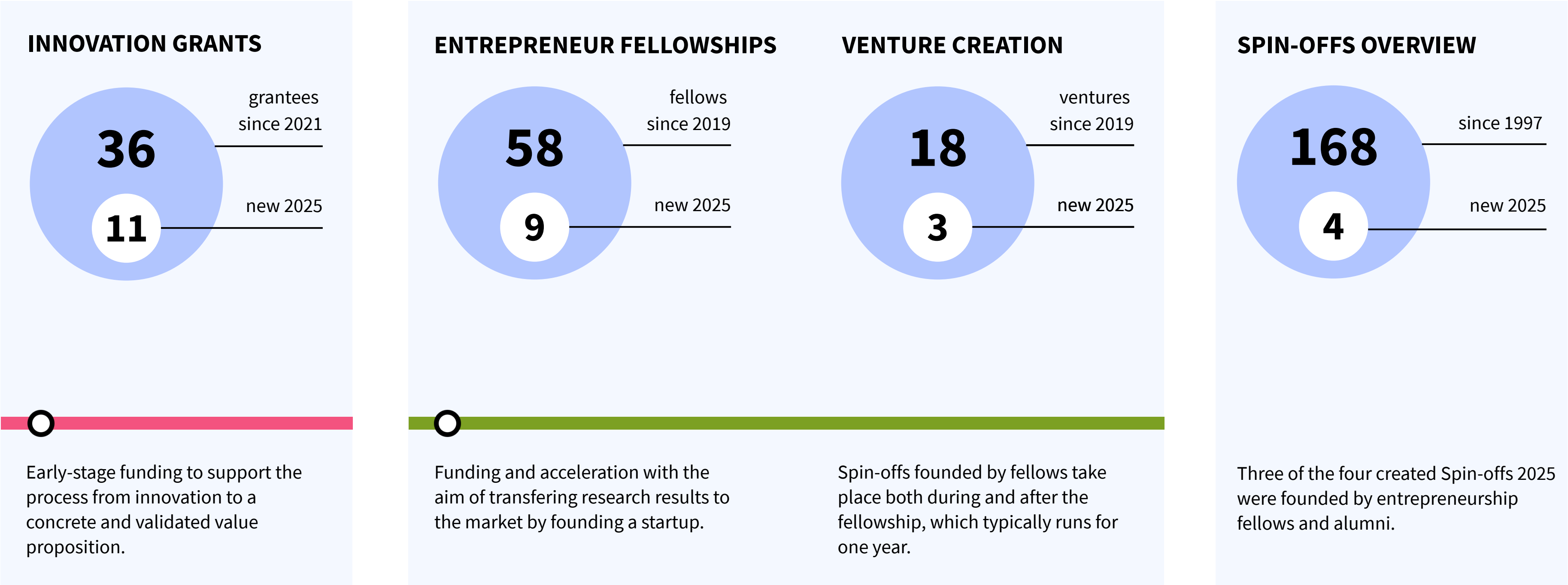
Initiative Lead: Ning Wang Digital Society Initiative



Funding stages:

-  DRIVE | Transfer to launch mature innovation initiatives
-  DRIVE | Action for early-stage innovation initiatives

UZH Innovation Hub – Venture Creation

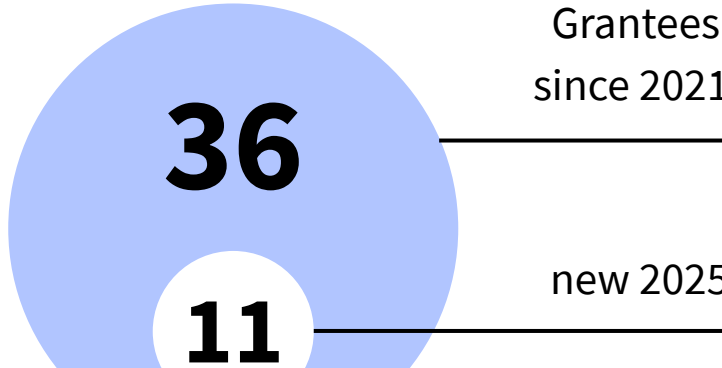


EVIIVE Decision-making aids for cancer therapies EVIIVE is on a mission to transform the treatment selection of cancer through innovative extracellular vesicle biomarker discovery platforms, IMPASS & IMPACT. Entrepreneur Fellow Alumni: Kevin Yim	NERAI BIOSCIENCE Genetic healing with high-tech procedures By harnessing the most advanced CRISPR and protein engineering technologies, Nerai develops tailor-made, highly precise, and personalized genome editors at scale, addressing previously unreachable diseases and rewriting the rules of therapeutic genome editing. Entrepreneur Fellow: Kim Marquart Entrepreneur Fellow Alumni: Lukas Schmidheini	NEURODAIGNOSTICS Cognitive testing with AI neurodAignostics use artificial intelligence to simplify the administration of traditional cognitive tests for neuropsychologists. For diagnoses on a wide range of neurological and psychiatric conditions, such as dementia or ADHD. Entrepreneur Fellow: Perrine Lhuillier
---	---	--

Three of the four newly created Spin-offs 2025 were founded by entrepreneurship fellows and alumni.

- BioTech
- MedTech
- Digital Innovation

Innovation Grantees 2025

Ayala Sara Licht-Handler Department of Psychology Reconnect – a self-help app for grief support after the death of relatives in hospitals or palliative care.	Federica Zavattaro Digital Society Initiative Fidovate Advisory – helps insurers work together to build trust with customers.	Frédéric Giraud Balgrist University Hospital Data Hub – solution for complex multimodal experiments offering faster integration and interactions.	Jana Pachlopnik Schmid University Children's Hospital Rapid, decentralised, functional immune test in pediatrics, for earlier clinical decision-making.				
Jeannette Behringer Sustainability Hub Sufficiency workshops for municipalities to create strategies for environmental goals.	Kilian Sprenkamp Department of Informatics Data-driven intelligence to help supply chain teams achieve faster responses and resilient operations.	Masaomi Hatakeyama Department of Evolutionary Biology and Environmental Studies GenomicsChain for genomics institutions to prove progress.	Stéphanie Prieto Department of History Unlocking archives with AI to enable sharing and development of teaching and training resources.				
Taiyo Yamamoto Institut of Anatomy Small molecule drug for ADPKD patients keep the total kidney volume growth within an acceptable range.	Teodora Vuković Linguistic Research Infrastructure LiRi Corpus Platform – improves workflows in the handling of complex multimodal data.	Rebecca Andrews Department of Chemistry Single-molecule protein detection service for diagnostics.	REPORTING <table><tr><td>36</td><td>Grantees since 2021</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>new 2025</td></tr></table>	36	Grantees since 2021	11	new 2025
36	Grantees since 2021						
11	new 2025						

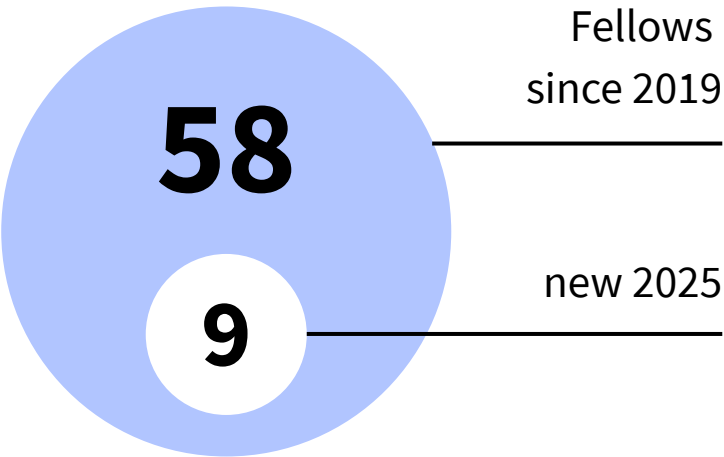
Entrepreneur Fellows 2025

Ashoka Vardhan Manchala Department of History Consultancy for Social Contexts in Impact Investment (CSC Impact)	Burcu Demiray Department of Psychology WiseLearn – A learning and innovation hub for 50+	Céline Portenier Department of Geography WebcamInsight – accurate and location-specific weather information	Isaac Bugueno Valdebenito Institute of Oral Biology MutaDent – novel bioactive and regenerative material for tooth repair
Marta Roccio University Hospital Zurich GEARiT – Organoid Platform for Hearing Restoration Therapeutics	Patrick Van Workum Department of Physics Artificial Intelligence for Light Detection	Perrine Lhuillier Psychological Institute neurodAlgnostics – AI-powered cognitive assessment	Rebecca Andrews Department of Chemistry Ultrasensitive Protein Detection Service
		Zheng Fan Institute of Anatomy FibriNova Therapeutics – advancing precision therapies to improve lives for patients with fibrosis	

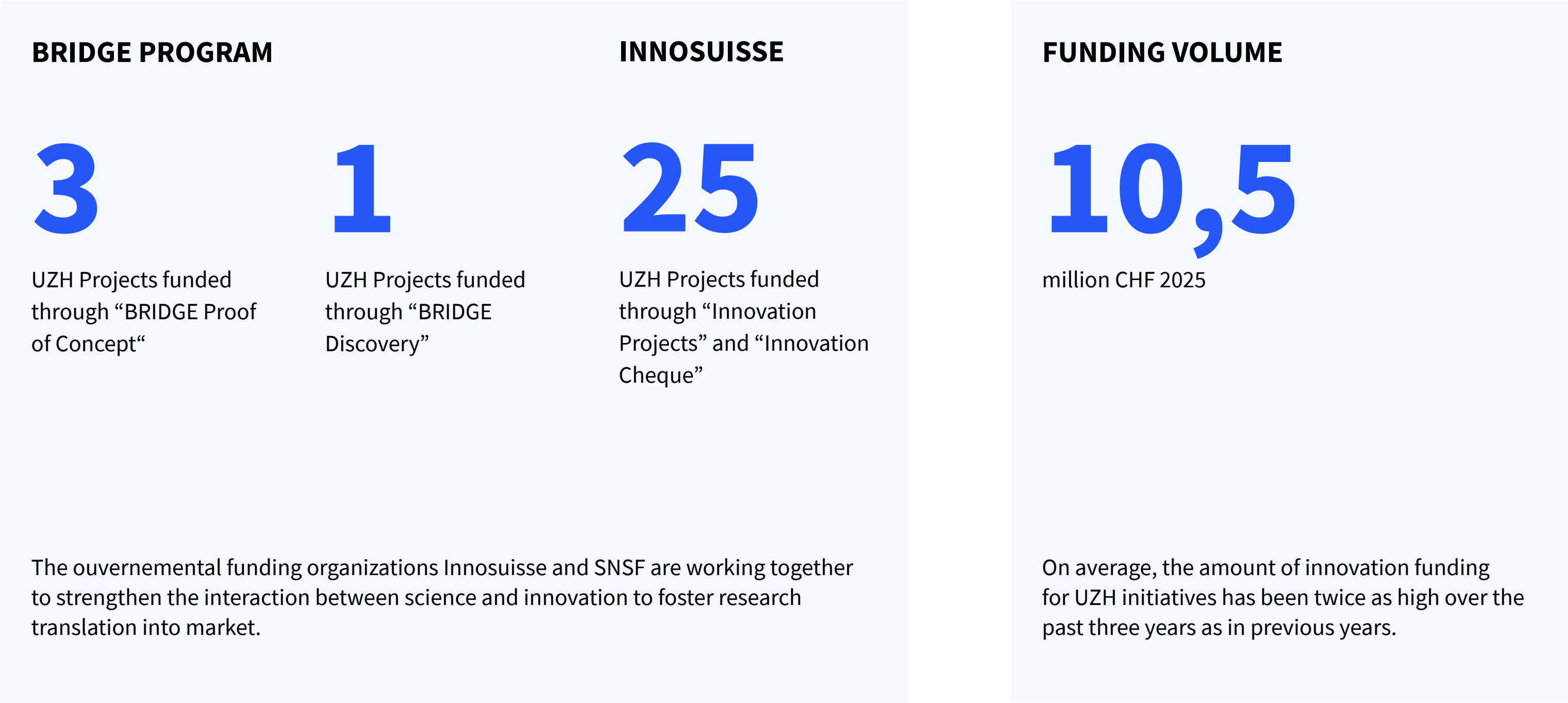
Funding tracks:

- BioTech / MedTech
- Sustainable Society
- Digital Innovation

REPORTING



Innosuisse & Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)



The Digitalization Initiative of the Zurich Higher Education Institutions (DIZH)

DIZH CALLS

9

UZH Projects funded through “Project Call”

5

UZH Projects funded through “Founder Call”

1

UZH Projects funded by “Rapid Action Call”

Dpromotes cooperation on innovation and digitalization by encouraging inter-disciplinary approaches between the four institutions University of Zurich (UZH), Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW), Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) and Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH).

FUNDING VOLUME

2,1

million CHF 2025

Since the launch in 2020 DIZH has supported innovative digitalization projects with a total funding of 14,8 million CHF for UZH (corresponds 41% of the total program funding).

Promoting Innovation | Funding Programs

Annual Report 2025 | UZH Innovation Hub

Educate & Inspire – Enabling Innovation at all Stages

Annual Report 2025 | Part 3





**ENTREPRENEURSHIP
BOOTCAMPS**

65

Participants 2025

ECTS-based courses for students offered via UZH's School for Transdisziplinary Studies (STS).

Teaching Format

ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

96

Participants 2025

Workshop series for PhDs & postdocs launched in 2025 together with UZH Graduate Campus.

Teaching Format

INNOVATOR MORNINGS

144

Participants 2025

**LONG NIGHT OF CAREER –
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

70

Participants 2025

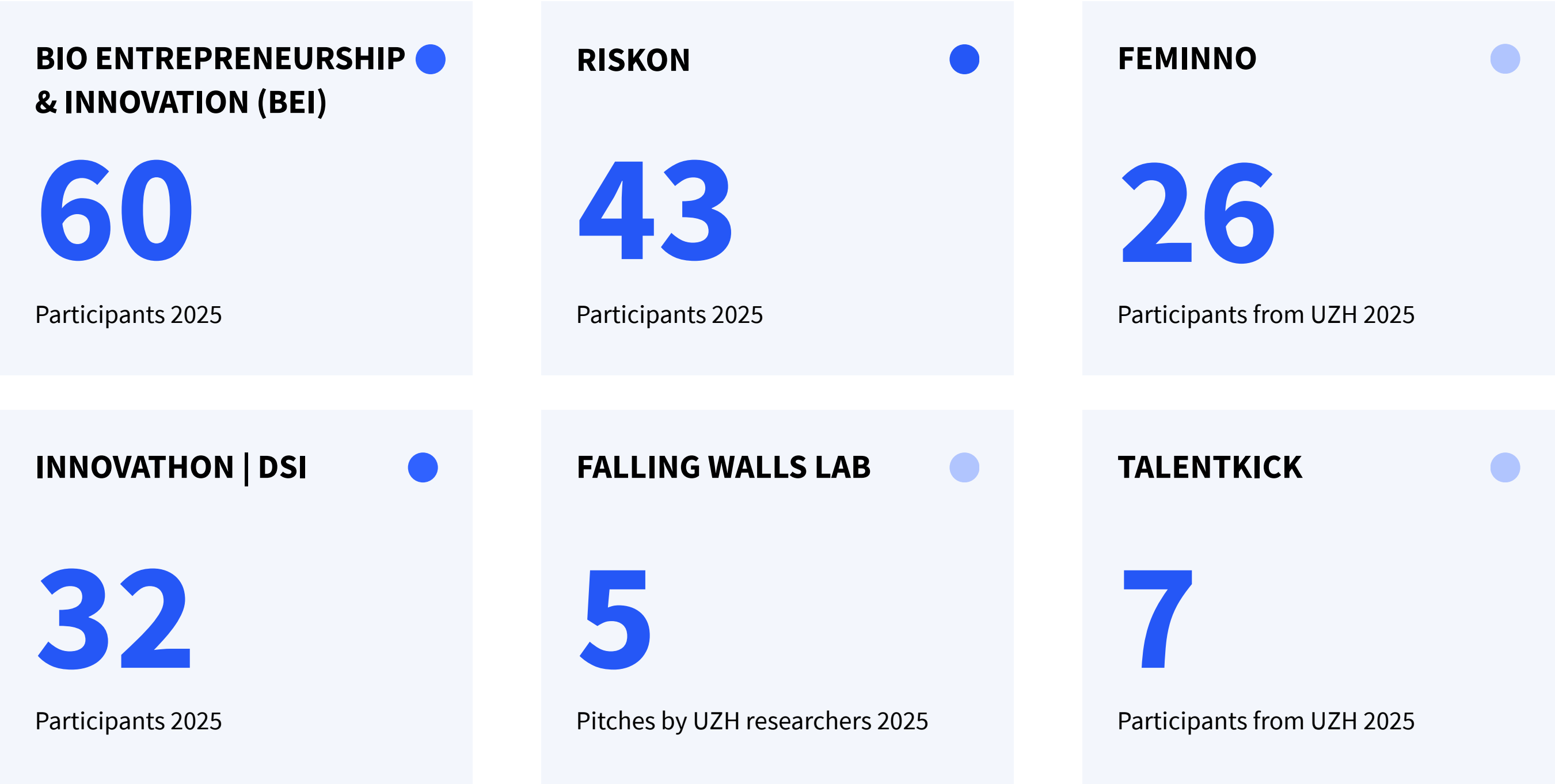
Events

**WORLD’S FIRST STARLAB
SPACE HACKATHON**

60

Participants 2025

Formats by other UZH Players & Partner



- Provided by UZH Divisions
- Provided by external Partners

Ecosystem & Networks – Support is Key to Expanding Reach

Annual Report 2025 | Part 4



Donations and Sponsoring



We are deeply grateful to our partners and donors, whose continued support advances our mission and empowers the next generation of innovators and founders at UZH.

ERNST GÖHNER STIFTUNG

Supports Entrepreneur Fellowships
in the field of Sustainable Society



HANS EGGENBERGER STIFTUNG

Supports Entrepreneur Fellowships
& Innovation Grants in the field of
Digital Innovation



WERNER SIEMENS STIFTUNG

Supports Entrepreneur Fellowships
& Innovation Grants in the field of
MedTech



«The Innovation Hub is the central point of contact for all innovation-related matters at UZH. We particularly value our collaboration with the Innovation Hub because it allows us to work with our funding partners and donors to implement cutting-edge projects and programs.»

Linda Schweizer-Thong
Partnerships and Philanthropy



UZH FOUNDATION
Die Stiftung der Universität Zürich

INNOVATION COUNCIL

The Board serves as a vital interface to business and industry and acts as a sounding board for the UZH Innovation Hub’s strategic direction.

Members: Alexandra Dhavernas, Andrew Reid, Andreas Wallnöfer (not on picture), Elisabeth Stark, Eva Maria Håkanson, Gabriele Siegert, Harald C. Gall, Kynan Eng, Maria Olivares, Mike Martin, Nadja Lang, Nike Möhle, Onur Boyman (not on picture), Oliver Ullrich, Simon Wirth, Stéphanie Engels, Tobias Zehnder, Volker Hofmann



External board

INNOVATION AMBASSADORS

All Ambassadors are researchers from across UZH who are committed to innovation and bring valuable experience in entrepreneurship, commercialization and knowledge transfer. As points of contact and role models within the faculties and institutes they advise science entrepreneurs and thereby strengthen the innovation ecosystem at the UZH.

Members: Anja Schulze, Claudia Röösl, Claudio Tessone, Fabian Winiger, Florent Thouvenin, Harald Gall, Katja Rost, Lauren Howe, Ning Wang, Philipp FÜRNSTAHL, Sarah Ebling, Stefan Seeger, Thomas Puschmann, Thorsten Buch, Viktor von Wyl

UZH-internal board

JURY MEMBERS

The jurors participate in the evaluation and selection of UZH Entrepreneur Fellowship candidates. Each person is assigned to one of the three tracks – Bio&MedTech, Digital Innovation, Sustainable Society.

Members: Anne Scherer, Bea Knecht, Charlotte Sigel, Claudia Witt, Constantin Overlack, Cyril Zipfel, Dominik Escher, Fabienne Hartmann, Gabriela Ecco, Gabriela Schaeppman-Strub, Harald C. Gall, Jan Lichtenberg, Jeannette Behringer, Leigh Pezzicara, Nicolò Rigamonti, Niklas Sjöblom, Onur Boyman, Philipp FÜRNSTAHL, Simon Hoerstrup, Stéphanie Engels, Tobias Zehnder, Zoë Johnson

Industry-academia composition

UZH Innovation Hub Office Team



Members (from the left)

- Anna Gromova, Hub Operations Manager
- Dr. Eva Maria Håkanson, Deputy Head Innovation
- Dana Steger, SoMe & Content
- Manuel Merki, Startup & Innovation Manager
- Dr. Maria Olivares, Head Innovation
- Claudia Masur, Program Coordinator
- Jeannette Bours, Lead Communications

Missing in picture:

- Dr. Marion Lehner, Lead Entrepreneurship Education
- Project team Minor Innovation & Entrepreneurship:
Prof. Dr. Gerhard Schwabe, Program Director
Dr. Piera Filippi, Program Coordinator
Jan Fülcher, Senior External Liaison Responsible
- New members 2026:
Dr. Kynan Eng, Entrepreneur in Residence
Laura Fernández, Industry Engagement Manager
Lucy Purpura, Student Assistant

Former members 2024/25:

Andreia Fernandes, Nuria Brüngger