

50



50 Years – 50 People

What began in 1976 as a commitment to give back has grown into a global force for the common good. As the Kühne Foundation celebrates its 50th anniversary, it reflects on five decades of building on the entrepreneurial success of its founder to create lasting global projects spanning logistics and humanitarian aid, climate, medicine, and culture.

For our 50th anniversary, we want to go beyond projects and milestones. We're taking a look behind the scenes to introduce the people who make the Kühne Foundation what it is today. From the founder who started it all, to the employees, as well as the partners and clients who collaborate with us around the world.

As part of this anniversary publication, we profile 50 individuals connected to the foundation reflecting the breadth of the work being done and its impact.

Every day, these individuals give their best, bringing energy and ideas, applying expertise, launching projects, questioning assumptions, sharing knowledge, and advocating for change. Their dedication is at the heart of this publication and showcases the culture behind the foundation's work.

What began as a commitment to give back is carried forward by the people featured here. Turn the page to meet them and explore the stories behind 50 years of impact.



Klaus-Michael Kühne

Actively Shaping the World

Fifty years ago, my parents and I founded the Kühne Foundation. We did so out of the conviction that entrepreneurial success is linked to social responsibility. With its establishment, we saw the opportunity to secure the long-term strategic leadership of Kühne+Nagel and to contribute to the common good with the company's profits.

It is gratifying to see how my foundation has developed over the past five decades. What began as a local organization is now one of the largest foundations in Europe: internationally oriented, decentralized, and – particularly im-

portant to me – efficient and independent in its operations. Around 800 employees are involved in applied programs and projects in the key areas of logistics, climate, medicine, and culture. The Kühne Foundation acts where politics and markets leave gaps.

As an operational foundation, we act through our own initiatives and institutions. In the logistics sector, we have not only significantly advanced education and training but also given the entire discipline new significance in science, climate protection, and humanitarian aid. Those who master complex logistical processes

create the basis for sustainable economic and social development.

Since the opening of the Kühne Logistics University in 2010 in my hometown of Hamburg, we have been training the specialists and managers of tomorrow and making a significant contribution to the advancement of the entire industry through our research. Today, the Kühne Logistics University is an internationally renowned institution that also operates a campus in Vietnam.

Logistics expertise forms the cornerstone of our work in the humanitarian sector: HELP Logistics advises humanitarian organizations and governments on optimizing their disaster relief efforts, ensuring that aid supplies arrive on time where they are needed. LEARN Logistics collaborates with universities in Africa, providing 10,000 students each year with qualifications that open the door to promising career pathways. Since 2022, the Kühne Climate Center has established itself as a sought-after partner for logistical issues related to climate transformation and it drives projects that support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

In the medical field, our Medicine Campus Davos – with its 500 employees – makes a crucial contribution to personalized therapy, rehabilitation, and prevention, particularly in the areas of allergology and cardiology. A prime example of this is the Center for Allergy Research and Education (CK-CARE), founded by my wife, Christine Kühne. Since its inception in 2009, it has grown into Europe's largest private initiative dedicated to allergic diseases. Our Hochbergsklinik Davos has received numerous awards as one of the country's best rehabilitation centers.

In addition to our long-standing support of the Salzburg Festival, the Lucerne Festival, the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, and the Zurich

Opera House, my foundation recently committed to financing the construction of a new building for the Hamburg State Opera. The site is intended to be not only a modern performance venue, but also a place where Hamburg residents and their guests can experience the Elbe River and the port.

“Entrepreneurial success should go hand in hand with promoting the common good.”

These examples underscore the Kühne Foundation's commitment to taking responsibility and bringing about lasting improvements in society through forward-looking initiatives. My wife and I extend our sincere thanks to all the Kühne Foundation's companions, partners, and employees, whose support has driven the developments of the past 50 years. The Foundation's Board of Trustees plays a crucial role, advising me and jointly making strategic decisions. At the heart of our work are the dedicated and competent individuals behind our projects and institutions, whose efforts we wish to showcase in this publication commemorating our 50th anniversary.

1976 – 2026

From logistics funding to an operational foundation with global reach.



1976

Foundation established by the Kühne family in Lenzerheide, Switzerland.

1991

Dialogue on the environmental impact of transport and logistics through applied research, events, and publications.

2000

Integration of the Kühne family's previously private cultural patronage into the foundation's work; focus on classical music and opera, e.g. the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival.



In logistics, endowed professorships were established (2000 WHU, Vallendar; 2003 HSG, St. Gallen; 2005 TU Berlin; 2007 Tongji, Shanghai; 2017 Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá).

1980

Establishment of the focus area logistics through support of research and teaching, as well as through scholarships. Initial research projects such as "Logistics for Small and Midsized Companies" (1989).



2004

At the initiative of Christine Kühne, the Neurodermatitis Counseling Center is established at the University Children's Hospital Zurich.

2005

First NETLOP seminar for the professional development of logistics experts.



2010

With the start of the Kühne Logistics University (KLU) in Hamburg, the foundation's commitment to academic teaching and professional development is significantly expanded.

The foundation's logistics expertise forms the basis for HELP Logistics; this division supports humanitarian organizations worldwide with their aid deliveries to crisis areas.



2014

The acquisition of the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos lays the foundation for the Medicine Campus Davos, which today combines therapy, research, and education.



2024

The Kühne Climate Center was founded in Hamburg with a focus on the decarbonization of logistic supply chains.

LEARN Logistics is spun off and expands its international offices in Tanzania and Ethiopia.

2009

CK-CARE (Christine Kühne – Center for Allergy Research and Education) intensifies its activities in the healthcare sector, focusing on areas such as allergology and personalized medicine.



2020

With the founding of Cardio-CARE, the foundation expands its medical activities to the field of cardiology.

2025

The foundation announces the construction of a new opera house in Hamburg.



KLU opens its second campus in Vietnam.



Efficient supply chains are far more than mere infrastructure: they ensure the flow of goods, enable economic development, and strengthen social stability — in established economies as well as in crisis and growth regions.

The Kühne Foundation's goal is to expand logistics expertise worldwide in the fields of science, humanitarian aid, and development cooperation, thereby sustainably promoting economic capability, resilience, and humanitarian effectiveness. This is achieved through a holistic approach that combines research, education, and practical application.

With the founding of the **Kühne Logistics University** (KLU) in 2010, the foundation set a milestone in academic education. The internationally oriented university, based in Hamburg, trains leaders who will shape global value and supply chains responsibly. Research priorities such as sustainable logistics, digital transformation, and data-driven decision-making contribute to the development of future-proof solutions. Since 2025, KLU has operated an additional campus in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and it also maintains a professorship and a research partnership in Bogotá, Colombia.

The **LEARN Logistics** education program supports the development of sustainable training structures in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. In collaboration with local and international partner universities, the foundation develops degree programs and professional development opportunities that qualify skilled workers and strengthen key supply sectors, such as health and agriculture.

With **HELP Logistics**, the foundation applies its logistics expertise to humanitarian and development practice. Since its founding in 2014, HELP has established a global field presence. Through supply chain diagnostics, capacity building, and applied research, HELP works with governments, international organizations, commercial partners, and local institutions to strengthen crisis preparedness and build the resilient supply chains on which vulnerable communities depend.



Oleksandra Shvets

The Right Place at the Right Time

Oleksandra Shvets found KLU at exactly the moment when she needed it most. Forced to leave Ukraine when the war pushed her studies online, she moved to Italy and began looking for a way to continue her logistics education in person. That search led her to KLU, where one email set everything in motion. She was accepted, relocated to Germany – and jumped headfirst into campus life. Alongside her bachelor studies, she found time to act as an Academic Student Senator, work at the student consultancy Advisupply, and help organize KLU Thinks Big and TEDx events – and that was in addition to a position as a student employee.

At her bachelor's graduation in 2025, Oleksandra Shvets received awards for her engagement: the President's Medal for Citizenship and a DAAD scholarship. Whenever the 22-year-old talks about it, she still seems surprised. Her drive to do so much comes from two sources: one is the chance to communicate and interact with instructors and her fellow students. "Everything I've done was a group effort. I had support from other students, professors, and staff," she recounts. The other motivation is to contribute to a community that has so generously and gracefully accepted her. "I want to give something back and I will keep giving back even after my graduation."

Oleksandra Shvets is now working on a master of science in supply chain management at KLU. Her commitment alongside her studies remains strong: currently, she is a KLU student ambassador, spokesperson for the student body, and also works part-time as a student trainee at Hapag Lloyd. When asked how she manages a master's degree and these additional activities, she smiles and replies that it just requires good coordination. Not surprising at Kühne Logistics University.



Kühne Logistics University

KLU – Kühne Logistics University – is a leading state-recognized and highly ranked international university headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, with an Asian campus in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Committed to empowering leaders with a strong operations mindset, KLU offers programs in business and management, data science and analytics, as well as specialized programs in logistics, operations, and supply chain management.



Prof. Dr. Arne Heinold

Research for Practical Application

For Arne Heinold, the connection between research and teaching is not just abstract theory: in his work, the Assistant Professor for Transportation at Kühne Logistics University (KLU) consistently bridges the gap between abstract mathematical models and practical applications. His goal is to find solutions for real-world logistics challenges – together with students, colleagues, and international experts. One example of this is SCGraph, a freely accessible program for transport planning. The KLU professor was part of the team that developed this practical tool based on open-source software: thanks to SCGraph, the shortest route between any two points worldwide can now be calculated in milliseconds – for rail, road, and sea.

Arne Heinold himself set the ball rolling when he came across the software during another project and contacted its lead developer, Connor Makowski (see team photo). Together with four other researchers, they harmonized large datasets from road, rail, and shipping networks and combined them into a single structure. In 2025, the international team received the Prize for Open Data from the renowned American research institute MIT for this achievement. “The fact that SCGraph has already been downloaded around 150,000 times and is used worldwide in research and practice demonstrates the potential of collaborative projects of this kind,” emphasizes Arne Heinold.

Fostering this potential is the goal of the professor and KLU – entirely in keeping with the foundation’s mission to “move things forward.” And for Arne Heinold, KLU is the place where such an idea becomes reality. This is precisely why he earned his master’s degree here in 2013, and why he returned as a professor in 2024 after a few years in the field. At KLU, he can pass on his theoretical and practical expertise to students – and simultaneously conduct intensive research, also in collaboration with other parts of the foundation. “The Kühne Foundation gives me the opportunity to work with world-class experts,” reports Arne Heinold. “For example the project at the Kühne Climate Center that I’m involved in is truly forward-looking. We’re opening up a new field of research here – and that’s something quite special.”

Internal Collaboration

The research project in which Arne Heinold supports the Kühne Climate Center (KCC) focuses on carbon dioxide removal methods, i.e., the sequestration of CO₂ in the oceans and on land. The KCC’s central question: how can logistics act as a catalyst for such climate transformation measures? Much remains unclear, as reliable data is needed for concrete statements. This is where KLU professor Arne Heinold comes in: he develops the mathematical models that allow for the calculation of key factors, such as efficient transport routes from mining sites to the sea for rocks that could store CO₂. Also, a doctoral position at KLU has been created for this project.



They jointly developed SCGraph (from left): Timothy Russell, Spyridon Lekkas, Austin Saragih, Willem Guter, Arne Heinold, and Connor Makowski.

The team for the successful start in Vietnam: Ina Litterst (top), Susan Brand-Bui, and Dr. Viet Dung Trinh.



Dr. Viet Dung Trinh,
Susan Brand-Bui & Ina Litterst

Fast-Track Campus

Set up an international campus of Kühne Logistics University (KLU) in 18 months? That might sound impossible – finding space, securing licenses, and recruiting students in a market where KLU is little known. A trio made it happen, though: Viet Dung Trinh, Campus Director KLU Asia; his deputy Susan Brand-Bui, and Ina Litterst, in charge of KLU’s international development. The idea took shape in mid-2024, and by late October 2025 the first 24 master’s students were ready to start in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The campus in Asia serves students with professional experience, offering the same flagship curriculum and quality as in Hamburg. Courses are delivered through a co-teaching model combining KLU professors from Hamburg with local lecturers, complemented by regional case studies and industry speakers. What sets KLU apart from other logistics and supply chain programs in Vietnam is the inclusion of strong digitalization, sustainability, and leadership components in the curriculum. But Viet Dung Trinh doesn’t see the new international campus as a competition: “We are not just another university. We are not here to compete. We use collaboration as a way to create something bigger and better.”

Vietnam was chosen because of its robust economic growth and budding position as a logistics hub. There is already a solid undergraduate pipeline in the country, but few options beyond that. What’s more: “There’s a real hunger for knowledge here – and an energy, a momentum – that makes Vietnam the right place to build a campus,” says Susan Brand-Bui. As such, KLU – one of the Kühne Foundation’s most important initiatives since 2010 – is bringing its supply-chain education closer to where it’s most needed, steered by the Kühne Foundation’s pragmatic approach.

Looking ahead, the task is to continue increasing brand awareness in the country; traction is expected to build as graduates demonstrate their newly acquired skills in the workplace. Vietnam is the first step in a broader internationalization of KLU – Africa and Latin America are the next locations for campuses set to build an interlinked learning network. “The discipline of supply chain is very global; the education that caters to it should also be global,” says Ina Litterst.



The First KLU Vietnam Cohort

In just two and a half months, the initial 24 master’s students were recruited for the KLU Vietnam campus. The cohort’s average age is 29, with about seven years of work experience – and all come from logistics or supply-chain roles, mostly at mid-management level. The program lets them accelerate their careers, supported by a tiered scholarship system that helps ease the financial burden.

Appreciating the exchange of ideas:
Steven Roche, Amina Djoudad (left),
and Andrea Bembenek-Jaimes.



Andrea Bembenek–Jaimes,
Amina Djoudad & Steven Roche

A Career and Knowledge Boost

Gone are the days when a college degree lasted a lifetime; today, it marks the beginning of a lifelong learning journey. To help people advance their expertise and keep their careers in motion, Kühne Logistics University (KLU) offers two pathways: the Global Logistics & Supply Chain Leadership Program (ENLOP), targeting professionals from across Europe, and the Logistics of the Future Executive Program on Emerging Trends & Challenges (NETLOP), designed for experts in German-speaking countries. Conceived in 2001, NETLOP was the foundation's pioneering academic initiative, laying the strategic groundwork for KLU's start in 2010.

Both ENLOP and NETLOP feature a modular structure that allows participants to continue working full-time while immersing themselves in several compact learning blocks spread over a span of months. "While the target groups are slightly different, the overall aim is to bring together participants from different backgrounds within the logistics field for exchange and learning," says Andrea Bembenek–Jaimes, Program Manager – Executive Education & Business Development.

Amina Djoudad, CFO at Hapag-Lloyd France, was part of the 2024 ENLOP cohort. "The program gave me the time and space I never have in my day-to-day life to step back and think about the big challenges we're facing," she says. Particularly relevant for her were the modules on AI and sustainability. Steven Roche, Director of Corporate Procurement and Deputy VP Supply Chain Management at Pilatus Aircraft in Switzerland, was also in the 2024 cohort. "After completing a master's degree years earlier, ENLOP gave me the chance to refresh my knowledge and gain new perspectives without having to step out of my career for a full-time program," he comments. His standout elements were the academic rigor, the supply chain modules focusing on resilience and change management, and the on-site company visits.

If Amina Djoudad and Steven Roche missed anything, it was the ability to continue the rich exchange with their cohort once the program concluded. Fortunately, KLU now fulfills this wish with an event that brings ENLOP and NETLOP alumni from across Europe together to continue the dialogue – and to keep learning.



Certificate Programs at KLU

ENLOP and NETLOP are modular executive programs for professionals who want to lead with impact in fast-changing industries. Delivered at top universities across Europe, they combine interactive learning, expert faculty, and peer collaboration. Carefully curated cohorts foster dialogue, innovation, and leadership, while a practice-oriented curriculum stays ahead of trends in logistics, technology, and global supply chains.



Batool Banihani, HELP Logistics (right), and Mohsen Sarhan, Egyptian Foodbank, work closely together.

Batool Banihani & Mohsen Sarhan

Turning Data into Action

The Egyptian Foodbank (EFB) forms the backbone of a secure food supply in Egypt: month after month, it provides hundreds of thousands of people in need with food. Thanks to the collaboration with HELP Logistics the EFB has succeeded in optimizing its supply chain, expanding its reach, and thus fulfilling its mission even more effectively.

“At the beginning of the collaboration, we were positively surprised by the high degree of digitalization and the data quality of the EFB,” says Batool Banihani, Supply Chain Advisor at HELP Logistics. An SAP system provides transparency and an overview of data in real time. Based on this solid data foundation, Batool Banihani and her team conducted analyses of the EFB supply chain. A team of HELP and EFB experts then determined how data could further support logistics planning and coordination in day-to-day operations. This approach was entirely in line with the pragmatic and proactive approach of Mohsen Sarhan, CEO of EFB.

At the end of 2025, the team published a dashboard that clearly visualizes the performance of the EFB supply chain. Based on data from warehousing, procurement, and distribution, EFB managers can now track supplies at both the operational and strategic levels and make better decisions.

Scenario analyses show that increasing the amount of food distributed by 40 percent could make it possible to provide for up to 2.4 million additional people within the same budget.

For Mohsen Sarhan, the dashboard – and what can be derived from it – is a remarkable success. He sees it as proof that EFB can operate based on data, measure relevant key performance indicators, and continuously improve its humanitarian performance. He therefore describes the dashboard as “one of the most sustainable projects that the Kühne Foundation has implemented for us”. The joint project between HELP and EFB is also developing into an example of how data-driven supply chain optimization makes food supply systems more resilient, better prepared for peak demand, and increases their effectiveness in the region.



Egyptian Foodbank

The Egyptian Food Bank was established in 2004 as a non-governmental organization dedicated to achieving food security in Egypt. Over the past 20 years, the Egyptian Food Bank – the region’s first development institution specializing in providing healthy food to those in need – has consistently supported the most vulnerable families in Egypt, addressing the challenges of accessing sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. This effort has directly contributed to alleviating hunger on a national level. HELP Logistics is a non-profit organization of the Kühne Foundation, founded in 2014. HELP works with governments, international organizations, and local partners to strengthen supply systems for vulnerable populations. HELP operates in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.



Improved the reliability of aid logistics:
Seynabou Diakhoumpa (top)
and Jens Grimm.



Seynabou Diakhoumpa &
Jens Grimm

Backbone of Humanitarian Aid

Since the outbreak of the civil war in April 2023, Sudan has been mired in a severe humanitarian crisis. More than ten million people have been forced to flee their homes. Over a million of them have sought refuge in eastern Chad alone. They depend on continuous aid. But getting that aid to them is extremely difficult. A key role is played by the transport corridor from Douala in Cameroon, through N'Djamena, the capital of Chad, to Abéché in the east of the country. HELP Logistics has therefore examined this route in detail to identify ways to make transport more reliable. Seynabou Diakhoumpa, Senior Operations Manager and Supply Chain Advisor at HELP Logistics West Africa, led the study. Together with seven aid organizations, including UNICEF, the team analyzed the conditions along the route.

“Our goal is clear: aid supplies such as medicines and vaccines should arrive exactly where they are needed,” says Jens Grimm, Deputy Representative for Operations at UNICEF Sudan and former Regional Chief of Supply for West and Central Africa. “HELP’s analyses help us to improve supply chains in a targeted way.” For the study, the team combined various approaches: research, on-site visits, interviews with drivers, and the evaluation of transport times and costs. “The focus was always on the specific requirements of the aid organizations and the difficult conditions under which they operate,” said Seynabou Diakhoumpa. The final report now serves UNICEF and other organizations as a practical guide, for example, when choosing routes or planning according to the seasons. It also shows how alternatives can be effectively weighed. For instance, combining rail and road transport can reduce transport costs by around 40 percent compared to road transport alone, while maintaining similar delivery times. At the same time, reliability increases, especially during the rainy season. For UNICEF and its logistics partners, HELP’s findings facilitate realistic planning. The study clearly demonstrates how crucial functioning logistics are for humanitarian aid. Its results can also be applied to other regions and thus contribute to improving the long-term provision of aid to refugees.



The Douala–N’Djamena– Abéché Corridor

This roughly 2,700-kilometer route runs from Douala in Cameroon via N’Djamena, Chad’s capital, and onward to Abéché in the east. It takes about 20 days to traverse – 12 to 14 days of driving plus 4 to 7 days for border clearance. Along the way, trucks face more than 60 checkpoints, many charging fees, and security risks on certain stretches. With only a few roads paved, conditions worsen in the rainy season, further slowing convoys. Strengthening this corridor is not only a humanitarian priority but an investment in the regional trade infrastructure that communities and economies depend on.



The LEARN Logistics team in Ethiopia (from left to right): Daniel Abebe, Mesfin Sileshi, Abebech Sory, Fikirte Mezegebu, Dawit Teshome, Girma Negewo, Hailu Abebe, and Prof. Teferi G. Fenta (standing).

Prof. Teferi Gedif Fenta

A Reliable Passage for Essential Medicines

Teferi Gedif Fenta began his career in 1988, working as a pharmacist in a rural hospital in north-western Ethiopia. He expected his work to be grounded in the chemistry-focused pharmacy curriculum he had studied, but he soon discovered that the reality looked very different. “The profession in the healthcare systems calls for making essential medicines available and maintaining storage conditions and safe transport for pharmaceuticals, because in many cases they are fragile. That was when I realized the importance of logistics,” says Teferi Fenta. This experience sharpened his focus on public health pharmacy, with logistics as a cornerstone in his further professional activities.

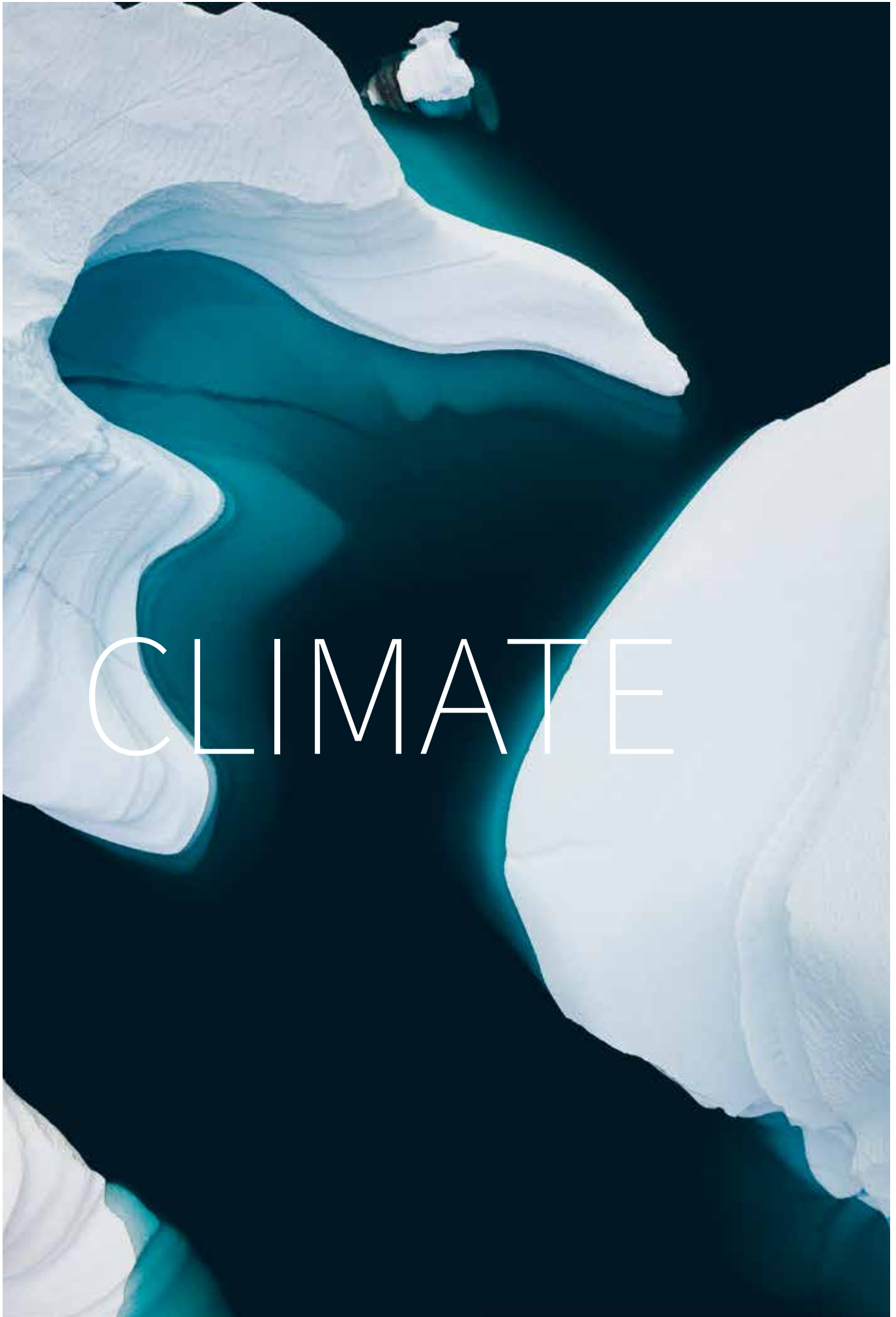
As a professor at Addis Ababa University’s School of Pharmacy, he contributed to developing curricula to help build a resilient supply of medicines in Ethiopia through the Senselet initiative. Supported by the Kühne Foundation alongside other partners, Senselet operates on multiple levels, from continuous professional development for logistics managers to training sessions for frontline staff, such as truck drivers and warehouse forklift operators. It also includes postgraduate coursework that strengthens university teaching and research. This multi-tier model is designed for national ownership and close public-sector involvement, so that training outcomes inform policy and standards. Following progress in Ethiopia, the Senselet approach was adapted for and rolled out in Tanzania.

Since January 2025, Teferi Fenta has been the founding director of Kühne Foundation’s LEARN Logistics office in Ethiopia. The 59-year-old is supported by a seven-member team of experienced logistics and business experts. Currently their focus is, among others, on linking universities and other stakeholders to have an even bigger impact on establishing resilient logistics and supply chain systems in Ethiopia for the healthcare sector and beyond. For Teferi Fenta, there’s another aspect to his team: delivering impact beyond what any person alone could accomplish on an issue he recognized early in his career.



Strengthening Healthcare

Senselet means “chain” in Amharic, one of the official languages of Ethiopia, and embodies the program’s vision: to connect people, processes, and knowledge to create reliable supply chains in the African healthcare system. Since its launch in July 2022, the Senselet Ethiopia project has seen eleven doctoral candidates working on their dissertations, 56 students completing master programs, and more than 1,800 professionals finishing advanced training. In addition, over 1,500 operational logistics staff have participated in technical and vocational training to keep their skills up to date.



The transition to a climate-neutral economy is an infrastructural challenge. Transport and logistics are, in this context, not only part of the challenge but also a key partner in the solution.

New energy systems, CO₂ removal solutions, and climate-friendly industries don't emerge through innovation alone — they must be built, supplied, and globally integrated. Efficient logistics enables the expansion of renewable energies, the establishment of new climate-relevant value chains, and the efficient management of large material flows. It creates the conditions for climate protection measures to become practically implementable and economically viable. Logistics thus becomes the operational foundation of the climate transformation.

The **Kühne Climate Center (KCC)** combines both perspectives: it works on the decarbonization of logistics systems as well as on the targeted use of logistics expertise for climate protection. The goal is to use logistics as an active lever for building climate-compatible markets and infrastructures.

Headquartered in Hamburg with international offices in Kenya and Tanzania, the KCC develops and implements concrete projects together with partners from science, industry, and the public sector. These projects demonstrate, under real-world conditions, how logistics systems can be designed to be climate-friendly and simultaneously used as an enabler for new, sustainable industries.

In this way, logistics transforms from an emitter to an enabler – contributing to a decoupling of economic development from greenhouse gas emissions and supporting innovative growth models.



Olivia Lamanya

The Electric Mobility Enabler

“Malkia Mkuu wa gari za umeme” – Kiswahili for “angel of electric mobility” – is what many call Olivia Lamanya. She laughs at the title, but her work across Eastern Africa makes a strong case for it. The 45-year-old has been a project manager at Kühne Climate Center in Nairobi, Kenya, for nearly two years, during which she has convincingly shown through pilot projects that e-mobility can work across all types of transport: from e-bikes and small delivery vehicles to large trucks. Olivia Lamanya’s focus is squarely on the practical aspects of e-mobility: which vehicles are suitable? How will drivers load and operate them? How do stated battery ranges hold up in daily use? Thinking ahead to a day when e-mobility is commonplace, she has also initiated measures to prepare mechanics for electric vehicles.

The project manager sees herself as a conduit between various stakeholders. In the Road to Addis project, she brought together utility companies, vehicle manufacturers, and policymakers to witness what electric mobility can do. “We can talk theory all day,” Olivia Lamanya says, “but when people see it, everything becomes easier.” All the while, she leverages her deep knowledge of logistics, having lived every layer: she loaded trucks at sixteen, later drove a forklift, and worked in warehousing, procurement, and operations. She puts herself in the shoes of people filling various roles, trying to anticipate what a person might need next. As a graduate of business administration, she also weighs the economics – higher upfront costs, yes, but a clear long-term payoff.

What motivates Olivia Lamanya is reducing the environmental impact of logistics. Next, she aims to show what electric vehicles can do in the high-intensity environment of the port of Mombasa – again by connecting the right people and enabling progress where it matters most. Once again, she lives up to her reputation as the “angel of electromobility”.



Road to Addis

In 2025, the Road to Addis convoy showed that long-distance electric mobility in East Africa is within reach. A large electric truck completed a 3,200-kilometer round trip between Nairobi, Kenya, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, supported by partners in both countries, especially national electricity providers. Along the route, the team highlighted the social, economic, and environmental aspects of clean transport to local communities. Organized by Intro Africa with partners including the Kühne Climate Center, the expedition demonstrated the feasibility of long-distance, cross-border travel in Africa.



Dr. Mariam Swaleh

A Life Devoted to the Study of the Sea

A key experience shaped Mariam Swaleh's academic path in chemistry – bachelor, master, and PhD – and everything that followed. That moment came during her undergraduate studies. On a field placement at the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, she came face-to-face with sewage spilling into the sea. It was the first time she truly felt the reality of ocean pollution. The scale and urgency of the problem were impossible to ignore. “That’s when I became passionate about applying my chemistry knowledge to ocean research,” she says.

Initially, her focus was on using microalgae to treat wastewater. Today, she is at the forefront of marine carbon dioxide removal (mCDR) research and development in Africa. She serves as Assistant Registrar for Research and Grants at the Technical University of Mombasa and as Director of the Ocean–Climate Innovation Hub Kenya, a UN Ocean Decade–endorsed project operating within the Global Ecosystem for Ocean Solutions, a program led by Ocean Visions, where she is an Ocean–Climate Innovation Fellow.

As part of an international research team, Mariam Swaleh is conducting ocean alkalinity enhancement experiments – a promising mCDR approach that may enhance carbon uptake through the increase of ocean alkalinity. The team collects seawater into large containers, adds alkaline material, and closely observes how marine life – particularly phytoplankton – responds. These experiments are now underway at 19 sites worldwide, generating critical insights into how different ocean regions react to such interventions.

However, advancing this research along the Kenyan coast comes with significant challenges. Specialized equipment and materials are costly to transport, and without them, the work cannot move forward. The Kühne Foundation stepped in to cover the cost of shipping chemicals, consumables, and other essential materials from Germany to the Kenyan port of Mombasa. In her view, this support has led to local research capacity building. Beyond logistics, the partnership has opened new doors, leading to invitations for her to speak at high-profile events supported by the Foundation, including the Africa Carbon Removal Summit.

That visibility advances another mission close to her heart: inspiring young girls, especially those from Kenya's coast, to see a future for themselves in science. As she puts it: “I share my work so that someone else can see it's possible for them too.”



From Pilot Project to Global Solution

The ocean naturally absorbs CO₂. In the framework of the so-called mCDR research, the focus is to explore ways in which oceans can increase that uptake. The Kühne Climate Center contributes its logistics expertise to help develop and scale the technology with the goal of transforming pilot projects into globally relevant solutions.



Maruxa Cardama

Transforming Freight Transport

World trade is one of the world’s most essential systems – connecting people, markets, and opportunities, and enabling economies to grow. Yet as global challenges intensify, the freight transport and logistics sector is having to adjust to new realities: lowering its climate impact and dependence on fossil fuels, and adapting to global shocks and climate-related disruptions to infrastructure, while increasing opportunities for low-carbon economies to remain competitive. Where some see obstacles, others see room for transformation. One of those people is Maruxa Cardama, who served as Secretary General of SLOCAT, the global Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport, for seven years.

During her tenure at SLOCAT, the Kühne Climate Center was born, and it became one of her most important partners. “From the onset, it was an eye-to-eye collaboration – humble, open, experimental – and it empowered us in ways a small NGO could not achieve alone.” Support from KCC rested on three pillars: technical expertise, among others from academics at Kühne Logistics University; access to the Kühne Foundation’s vast network; and earmarked funding that allowed SLOCAT to focus more on freight. One key output of the partnership was the roadmap on transforming freight transport and logistics toward intermodal, low-carbon, efficient, and resilient systems. Created for decision-makers and other actors who shape these systems, these science-based tools outline actions that deliver quick wins, set the framework for long-term transformations, and help decision-makers understand what to prioritize when time and resources are short.

Maruxa Cardama explains that the collaboration also played a key role in ensuring that freight transport and logistics moved from the margins of international sustainability debates into the center of global policy frameworks. “People are now recognizing how we move goods has the power to change the fabric of our economies and societies, and impact human development at large,” she says. This greater visibility helped make “enhancing efficiency and promoting sustainable connectivity and logistics” a priority area in the first-ever United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035). For Maruxa Cardama, this milestone gives her confidence for the growing global commitment to advancing efficient, connected, clean, and sustainable freight transport and logistics systems.



Sustainable Low Carbon Transport

The Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport (SLOCAT) brings together over 100 organizations to accelerate the transformation of transport systems and services towards inclusive, healthy, green, and resilient solutions for people and the planet. SLOCAT provides collaborative data and evidence-based knowledge, action initiatives, political strategies, dialogue, and strategic communications. This helps build collective thought leadership and advocacy at the crossroads of transport, sustainability, climate, and social justice issues.



For more than 15 years, the Kühne Foundation has been developing and supporting programs at the Medicine Campus Davos for the research and treatment of common diseases such as allergies and cardiovascular problems.

The goal: to achieve better health and a higher quality of life through personalized prevention and treatment, thereby also relieving the burden on the healthcare system. The Medicine Campus Davos stands for research, education, and care – a shared mission of over 500 specialists from a wide range of disciplines. Here, the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos and several research institutes come together in a unique setting where translational medicine is practiced at a university level.

The **Hochgebirgsklinik Davos** is a leading Swiss rehabilitation clinic specializing in cardiology, pulmonology, dermatology, allergology, and psychosomatic medicine for adults, children, and adolescents. Treatments and therapies are tailored to individual needs, ensuring patients receive optimal care. Diagnostics, therapy, and prevention are scientifically monitored in cooperation with the research institutions on the campus and continuously optimized based on the latest findings, as exemplified by the RECOVER cardiology rehabilitation research project.

CK-CARE has specialized in allergy research and education since 2009. The CK-CARE network is building one of the largest internation-

al allergy and atopic dermatitis biobanks. Research teams are working with international partners to improve diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and education in order to alleviate the life of allergy sufferers.

Cardio-CARE is working on the largest whole-genome sequencing research program in the German-speaking world. This multidisciplinary project is based on intensive collaboration between the various institutes on the Medicine Campus Davos, the University Hospital Zurich (USZ), and the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf (UKE). The focus of these activities is the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases.

Davos BioSciences operates a certified biotechnology and database infrastructure. Here, research findings are used in cooperation with the pharmaceutical industry to develop innovative therapies. The focus is on inflammatory skin diseases such as atopic dermatitis, as well as other allergic conditions and immune system disorders.



A well-coordinated team at the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos: Ramona Beckmann, Rahel Schöni, Rahel Schwegler, Nicole Parpan (back row, from left to right), Andreas Meier, Flurina Büsser, Nikolai Schmid, and Flurina Foppa.

Rahel Schöni

Time for Empathy

When Rahel Schöni, a trained nurse, joined the cardiology department of the Hochgebirgsklinik (HGK) in Davos in 2021, she had a clear vision: she wanted to be closer to people, and make a difference – which is entirely in line with the Kühne Foundation’s mission. Since 2023, this career changer, who previously worked in an IT company, has led a team of 20 colleagues.

“Most of our rehabilitation patients have undergone heart surgery, for example, due to a heart attack, a heart valve defect, a bypass, or a transplant. Depending on the severity, they spend an average of three weeks with us,” she explains. Therapy focuses on building muscle strength – be it through weight training, running, or cycling. Patients can also access psychological counseling. Many need time to cope with extreme situations like a heart attack. Therefore, empathy is a prerequisite for working as a nurse. “When we notice that someone isn’t doing well, we actively offer them a conversation. Often, patients are afraid or suppress what happened. We address their individual needs, have an eye on them, and take action,” says the team leader, who splits her time equally between office work and patient care. She recalls how the team procured knitting supplies for a patient and how happy this patient was. “Thanks to the pleasant working atmosphere, I can do my job the way I want to,” says Rahel Schöni, who enjoys the unpredictability of her work the most.

Despite the severity of the cases, it’s important to remain professional and keep one’s personal distance. Training sessions, offered twice a month, help with this – for example, on nursing interventions, values, or self-reflection. When patients leave rehabilitation physically and mentally strengthened, many express their gratitude for the nursing team’s dedication with small gestures – such as by baking a cake or, as in the case of the hobby knitter, a multi-page letter. For Rahel Schöni, one thing is clear: here she is making a difference; here she has found her place.



Hochgebirgsklinik Davos

When the Kühne Foundation acquired the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos (HGK) in 2014, it was in a difficult financial situation. Today, it is one of Switzerland’s leading rehabilitation clinics in cardiology, pulmonology, dermatology, allergology, and psychosomatic medicine for adults, adolescents, and children. The clinic is part of the Medicine Campus Davos, and its proximity gives it access to close collaboration in research and education. The interdisciplinary treatments and therapies are tailored to the individual needs of the patients. In 2023 and 2024, the HGK placed second in the joint ranking of the best Swiss rehabilitation clinics.



Successful interdisciplinary collaboration: Dr. David Niederseer (left), Head Physician of Cardiology at the Hochgebirgsklinik (HGK) Davos, and Prof. Dr. Andreas Ziegler, Scientific Director at Cardio-CARE.

PD Dr. David Niederseer &
Prof. Dr. Andreas Ziegler

The Innovation Drivers

At the Medicine Campus Davos, you'll find everything that makes the hearts of people like David Niederseer, Head Physician of Cardiology at the Hochgebirgsklinik (HGK) Davos, and Andreas Ziegler, Scientific Director at Cardio-CARE, beat faster: a close integration of excellent research and clinical application, outstanding facilities, access to networks and data, and ample room for innovation.

Here in Davos, the Kühne Foundation consolidates its therapeutic, research, and training expertise in the fields of allergology and cardiovascular diseases. The shared goal of all facilities is to advance the development of new, individualized treatment approaches for the benefit of patients worldwide. The HGK, Cardio-CARE, Davos BioSciences, the Christine Kühne Center for Research and Education in Allergy (CK-CARE), and the Swiss Institute for Allergy and Asthma Research collaborate closely. "A major strength of the campus idea is its integration of diverse disciplines and fields, creating valuable synergies," emphasizes Andreas Ziegler. "Research findings are, wherever possible, directly translated into medical practice and applied," adds David Niederseer, who alongside his work as a practicing physician also conducts extensive research at the Medicine Campus Davos.

Currently, David Niederseer and Andreas Ziegler, supported by a 20-member interdisciplinary team, are leading RECOVER, a joint long-term study by HGK, Cardio-CARE, and Davos BioSciences. The colleagues say that studies like RECOVER are an example of the campus's innovative strength and emphasize what a great privilege it is to be a part of them – projects that are only possible in places like this. "Here, we not only have the scientific resources, but also a sufficient number of patients and, thanks to the Kühne Foundation, the necessary financial means. This makes us a true exception," says Andreas Ziegler. Both men are very grateful for the trust the foundation places in the team. Not least because, according to David Niederseer, RECOVER has the potential to revolutionize cardiac rehabilitation and steer it in a new direction: "If we succeed in answering currently unanswered questions and ultimately offering each patient the right treatment at the right time, that would be a huge step forward."



Revolution in Cardiac Rehabilitation

Launched in 2025, RECOVER includes a large number of rehabilitation patients in a study to obtain high-quality data from which preventive measures and therapies can be derived. Data from 1,200 cardiac rehabilitation patients will be collected annually until 2035. Cardio-CARE will be responsible for the statistical analysis. The biospecimens are processed by Davos BioSciences and stored in a biobank. Extensive internal and external expertise was incorporated in the study design beforehand. This resulted in questionnaires covering a total of 23 categories, as well as custom software that pseudonymously transfers the participants' data into the study database. Among other things, the team hopes to close current gaps in cardiological treatment guidelines and refine treatment strategies.



Working closely together: Dr. Cristian Riccio and Dr. Natalie Arnold.

Dr. Natalie Arnold & Cristian Riccio, PhD

Strong Together

At the Heart Clinic of the University Hamburg-Eppendorf (UKE), Natalie Arnold regularly treats patients who are struggling with the consequences of familial hypercholesterolemia (FH). This inherited lipid metabolism disorder leads to elevated low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels, thus increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease such as heart attacks and strokes. The insidious aspect is that the effects of FH often develop unnoticed and are therefore usually diagnosed too late. This compelled Natalie Arnold, specialist in internal medicine and cardiology, to work more closely with Cristian Riccio, a bioinformation data analyst at Cardio-CARE. Their close collaboration focusing on FH was based on established structures of cooperation between the UKE and Cardio-CARE.

In a study, the two researchers investigated the prevalence of the disease and the correlation between genetically confirmed FH and LDL cholesterol levels. For the genetic analysis, Cristian Riccio used the genetic information of over 7,000 Hamburg residents from the Hamburg City Health Study. This data is part of the whole-genome sequencing project by Cardio-CARE and the UKE. Natalie Arnold provided medical oversight for the study. A key finding: the previously assumed close link between very high LDL cholesterol levels and genetic FH could not be confirmed. Only half of the participants with genetically confirmed FH had severe hypercholesterolemia with significantly elevated LDL cholesterol levels. Conversely, the vast majority with severe hypercholesterolemia did not have genetically confirmed FH. “This means that genetic screening programs, which are currently being discussed, are not yet sufficiently evidence-based for widespread use in the general population,” Natalie Arnold summarizes. Cristian Riccio adds: “Refraining from genetic screening would avoid unsettling individuals with genetically confirmed FH, since not everyone develops severe hypercholesterolemia. And of course, it also saves costs.”

In a follow-up study, both experts intend to further investigate the complex causes of this LDL cholesterol metabolism disorder. For Cristian Riccio, the FH study is proof that the Kühne Foundation is a key player in research: “Thanks to Cardio-CARE, we can address research questions directly relevant to patients.” Moreover, the genetic data allows for a wide range of analyses in cardiological research, for example, on hypertension or heart muscle problems. “This is a real treasure trove,” says Natalie Arnold. “After all, cardiovascular diseases remain the leading cause of death worldwide.”



Cardio-CARE

Founded in 2019 by the Kühne Foundation, Cardio-CARE strengthens the Medicine Campus Davos in data analysis with a focus on cardiology. Cardio-CARE is distinguished by the largest whole-genome sequencing project currently underway in the German-speaking world: together with the Department of Cardiology at the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf (UKE) and the Institute of Pathology at the University Hospital Zurich, Cardio-CARE has sequenced the genomes of over 9,000 individuals. The goal is to better understand and diagnose the genetic basis of cardiovascular diseases and to develop new treatment options.



Antonello De Marco

More Valuable Than Any Star

For Antonello De Marco, good food is simply wonderful. “It’s delicious and healthy, makes you happy, and strengthens both body and soul,” the head chef of the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos (HGK) is convinced. When he talks about his work at the Kühne Foundation’s rehabilitation clinic, he begins to beam. Here at 1,600 meters above sea level, he helps patients with his culinary skills and contributes to their recovery.

Antonello De Marco created his first dish, a vegetarian Bolognese, at just seven years old – in his parents’ hometown in Calabria, Italy, where he and his eight siblings grew up. That’s where he discovered his passion for cooking. At 16, he moved to Karlsruhe, Germany, to live with his older sisters and began an apprenticeship as a chef. He worked hard, established himself in top-tier gastronomy, and even held a Michelin star for three years. A wonderful time, the now 46-year-old says, looking back. But at some point, he wanted to do something new and to have more time for his wife and children.

At HGK, Antonello De Marco found not only the necessary creative freedom in 2020, but also the perfect facility to create authentic Mediterranean cuisine at the highest level – balanced menus based on simple recipes, using fresh, high-quality, organic ingredients. Today, he and his 25-person team prepare around 1,000 meals daily for the three hospital restaurants and the cafeteria. They also manage events with 250 external guests and cooking classes for employees, “as precise as a Swiss watch,” as Antonello De Marco emphasizes. “Managing all of this and remaining profitable while maintaining high quality wouldn’t be possible without a good dose of organizational talent and, above all, the fantastic team spirit in our kitchen, but also throughout the entire hospital.” They are all like one big family, so work often doesn’t feel like work at all. Personal interaction is very important to him, and whenever possible, Antonello De Marco makes time for a chat – even with the patients. “Many people thank me and say my food has made them healthy,” he says, visibly moved. “Knowing that I’m doing something good for these people with my cooking is priceless – and fulfills me more than any Michelin star.”



Recipes from the Gourmet Kitchen

A Mediterranean diet has been proven to offer preventative protection and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Therefore, it is an important component of rehabilitation at the Hochgebirgsklinik Davos (HGK). A cookbook was published in early 2025 under the name of the HGK restaurant “La Capra” – meaning mountain goat. The idea originated with Jan Vontobel, the medical director and head of cardiology. The nearly 300-page book features recipes from the HGK restaurant, complemented by large-format photographs from Calabria. It also includes preparation tips and nutritional explanations for healthy and easily digestible cuisine.



Promoting young talent: Prof. Dr. Mirjam Schenk (center) with PhD students Lina Gross and Erik Kupschke.

Prof. Dr. Mirjam Schenk

On the Trail of Cellular Secrets

With each flare-up, a vicious cycle of itching and scratching begins; the skin is reddened and inflamed. Atopic dermatitis (AD), better known as eczema, can lead to sleep deprivation, difficulty concentrating, loneliness, and depression. Worldwide, one in five children and one in ten adults are affected.

Mirjam Schenk aims to help them with her research – by closing the still significant gaps in our knowledge about this complex disease. At CK-CARE, the immunologist has found the ideal environment for this: “After many years in academic basic research in the field of immunology, for example in the USA, what particularly impressed me about CK-CARE was how naturally research and clinical application are integrated.” Together with her team, the project leader has been searching for clues every day since 2022 – right down to the individual cell: what exactly triggers this complex AD disease? Which building blocks are suitable as starting points for diagnostics and therapy? And is it possible to predict in advance how someone will respond to a therapy?

To answer such questions, the researchers at CK-CARE need information on as many patients as possible. This information comes, among other sources, from the in-house biobank, where clinical data and samples from approximately 3,500 patients and healthy individuals are continuously collected. “The biobank is truly unique, not least because material from many patients spans several years,” emphasizes Mirjam Schenk. In addition, the teams have access to state-of-the-art methods in the laboratory, such as those for isolating immune cells, detecting biomarkers, and comparing the cells of patients and healthy individuals. “We are currently focusing on several promising markers as targets for treatment strategies,” explains Mirjam Schenk. “They could help to better tailor clinical diagnostics, therapy, and prevention to each individual patient and avoid side effects.”

The selection and supervision of students and doctoral candidates is also very important to the group leader: “Showing these young people how to think and work scientifically, and that team spirit and enthusiasm are also essential, is a very rewarding and important aspect of my work. After all, the future of research, and thus the well-being of countless patients, lies in the hands of the next generation.”

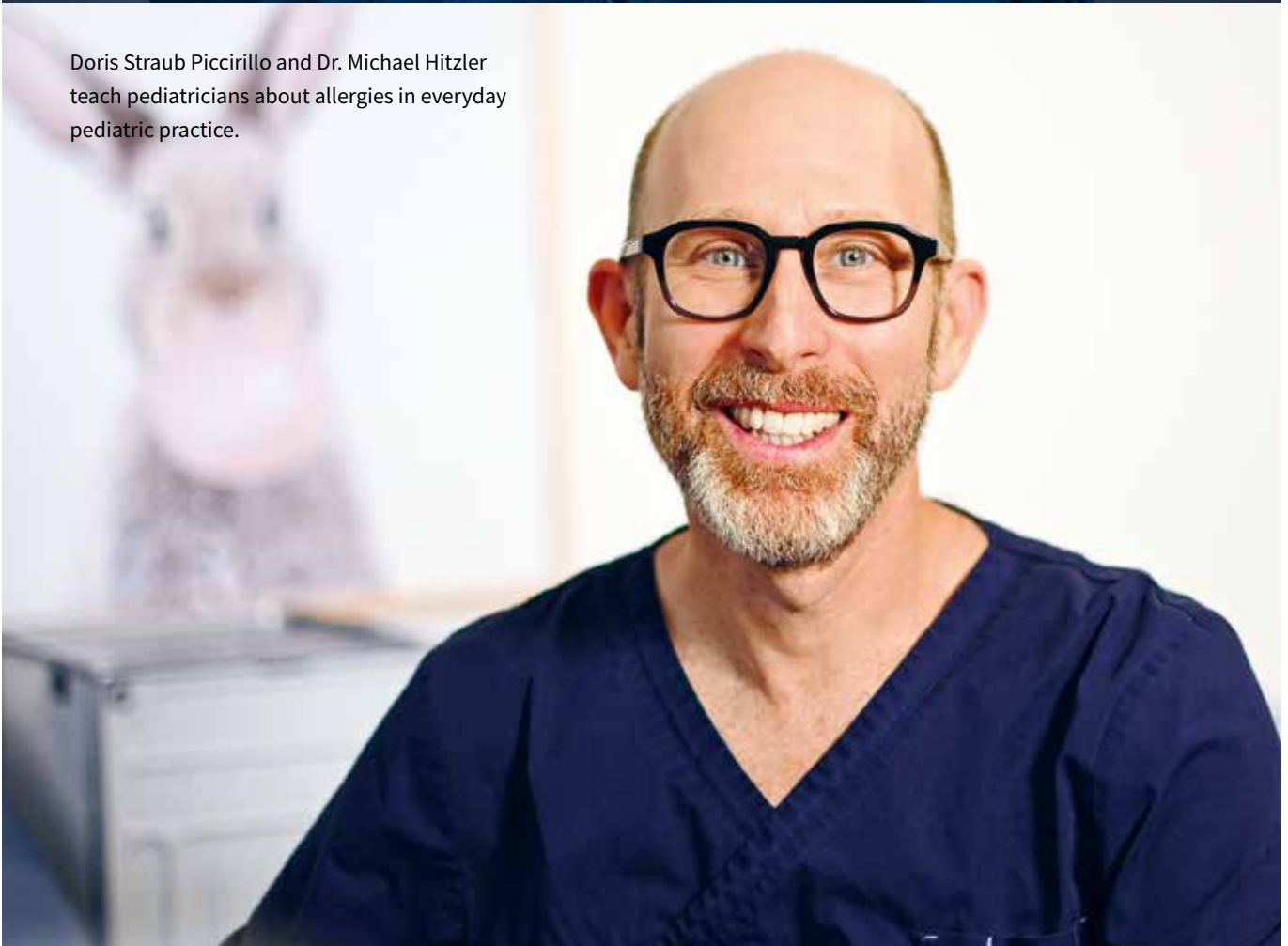


Center for Allergy Research

In 2009, the Kühne Foundation established the Christine Kühne – Center for Allergy Research and Education (CK-CARE). Based at the Medicine Campus Davos, with locations in Augsburg, Freiburg im Breisgau, St. Gallen, and Zurich, the center is dedicated to the research, therapy, prevention, and education of allergies, with a focus on atopic dermatitis (eczema), a field that has been relatively unexplored until now. CK-CARE is currently the largest private initiative in this field in Europe. Collaboration with internal and external experts is characterized by medical translation, meaning the direct transfer of research findings into clinical practice.



Doris Straub Piccirillo and Dr. Michael Hitzler teach pediatricians about allergies in everyday pediatric practice.



Doris Straub Piccirillo &
Dr. Michael Hitzler

Change Through Knowledge

“The first course was fully booked within seconds,” recalls Doris Straub Piccirillo, Co-Head of Education at CK-CARE. In the fall of 2012, 30 Swiss pediatricians benefited for the first time from the new continuing education course “Allergy in Everyday Pediatric Practice.” “Over 20 percent of Swiss children suffer from allergies, and the trend is rising, yet aspiring pediatricians still learn very little about this during their basic training,” says the education expert. The need to promote skills and acquire new knowledge remains enormous. Doris Straub Piccirillo, in cooperation with Prof. Dr. Roger Lauener, allergists, and the Swiss Association of Pediatricians, developed the curriculum for the block course, which consists of three two-day modules. Pediatrician and clinical lecturer Michael Hitzler has been involved in the planning and as a course instructor since the very beginning. As an attending physician for allergies and lung diseases at the Children’s Hospital of Central Switzerland, he also regularly treats children with chronic cough or asthma. “Many of their symptoms stem from allergies such as pollen, house dust, or pet dander. Trained pediatricians could easily treat them themselves in their practices – without months of waiting for a hospital appointment,” he emphasizes.

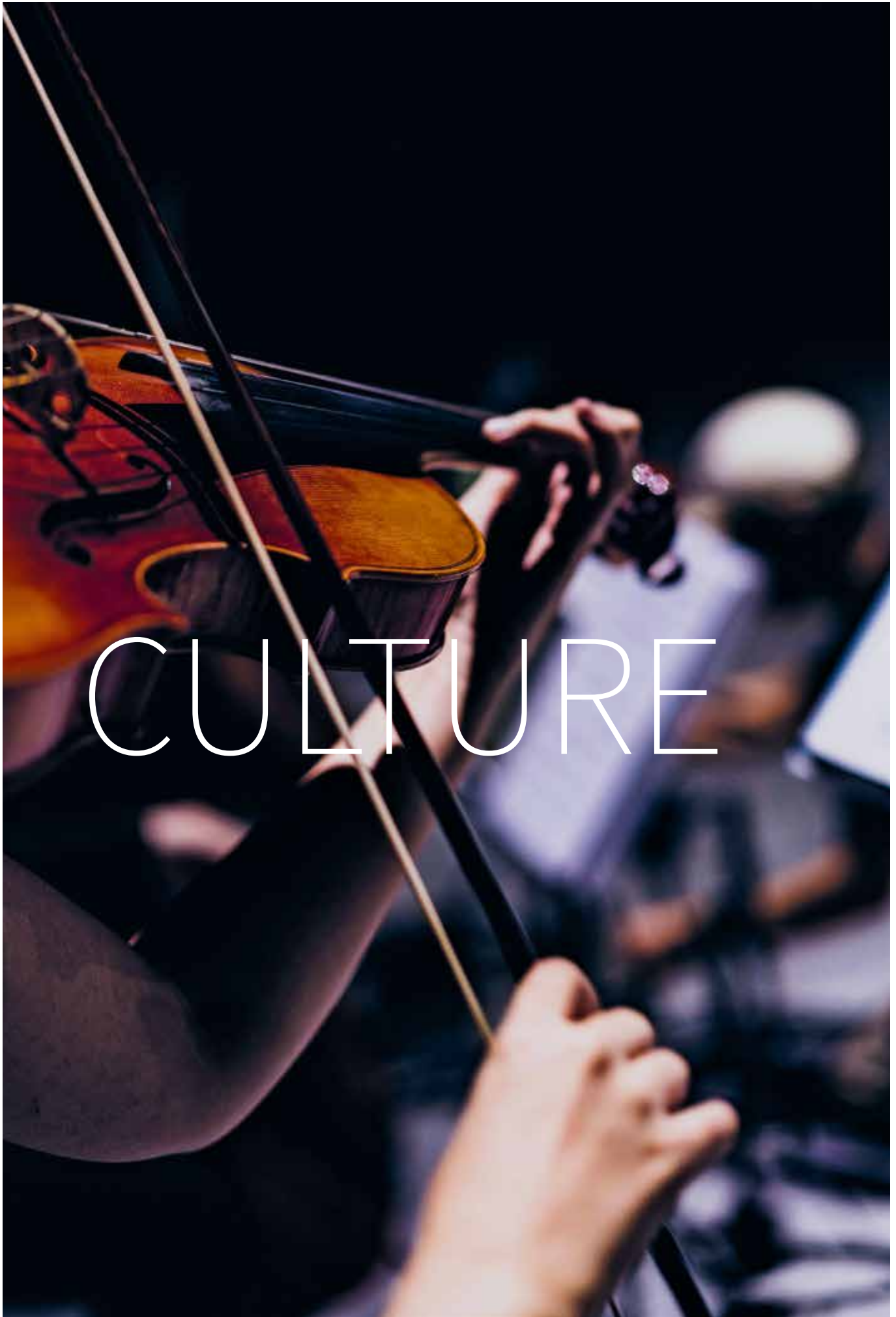
For the course, Doris Straub Piccirillo introduced the “flipped classroom” concept: instead of traditional lectures, participants prepare individually for the in-person session by acquiring basic knowledge through videos on the CK-CARE Allergy Online Campus. They also have access to scientific publications, fact sheets, and webinars, for example, on hay fever, atopic dermatitis, and anaphylactic shock. They then apply their knowledge interactively during the course. “They perform prick tests, for example, and learn from and with each other using case studies from their own practice. Each topic is accompanied by a specialist physician and course instructors from the field,” she explains. “Our goal is for pediatricians to be able to apply what they’ve learned directly in their daily practice.” A refresher course is offered as needed.

Michael Hitzler’s colleagues in the practice have already participated. “Seeing them implement their knowledge and needing my advice less and less is my greatest motivation,” he says. He himself often refers to the fact sheets and the flipped classroom method as a clinical lecturer at the University of Lucerne. “I’m proud that we’ve developed such a successful course. This wouldn’t have been possible without the Kühne Foundation. Besides research, education in medicine is essential because it can make such a difference,” says Doris Straub Piccirillo, who, despite being retired, continues to actively participate in the education team.



CK-CARE Education

CK-CARE Education is a platform for networking and exchanging experiences and for acquiring and applying knowledge. Its goal is to develop and offer needs-based and practical learning activities for the initial, advanced, and continuing education of medical professionals, based on evidence. Implementing the content and skills in everyday practice should enable better patient care and contribute to prevention. CK-CARE, initiated by Christine Kühne, covers a portion of the costs and actively supports the course faculty.



The Kühne Foundation promotes classical music at the highest level. Its aim is to strengthen the excellence and relevance of cultural institutions and, through its cultural activities, to make outstanding classical music accessible.

The Kühne Foundation supports renowned festivals, opera houses, and concert halls throughout Europe and promotes smaller regional cultural projects. A particular focus is the promotion of emerging artists. Its funding approach emphasizes long-term partnerships.

For many years, the foundation has been the main sponsor of the **Salzburg Festival**. Central to its support is the Young Singers Project. Young talents who qualify for a scholarship receive comprehensive artistic training and the opportunity to work with festival artists. Their performances are closely followed and often serve as a springboard for their careers.

Since 2008, the Kühne Foundation has been a supporter of the **Lucerne Festival**, and since 2020, one of its main sponsors. The foundation maintains a particularly close relationship with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra. Every summer, this festival brings together internationally renowned musicians for two weeks under the direction of Riccardo Chailly, creating outstanding musical moments in Lucerne.

The Kühne Foundation was among the **Elbphilharmonie's** earliest supporters and has been a principal sponsor since 2021. It supported the construction of the concert hall and its preliminary concert operations, enabled the founding of the Hamburg International Music Festival, and supported the opening festival.

For over 30 years, the Kühne Foundation and its founder have regularly supported the **Zurich Opera House**, including by funding selected opera productions and the International Opera Studio, a training center for young opera singers. Together with the Zurich Opera House, the Kühne Foundation plans to develop a high-caliber continuing education program for singers and aspiring opera directors.

In February 2025, the foundation announced its intention to build a new opera house in Hamburg and, upon its completion, to donate it to the **Hamburg State Opera**. The building, designed by renowned Danish architect Bjarke Ingels, is being planned and constructed in partnership with the City of Hamburg. The Kühne Foundation has previously supported the Hamburg State Opera, for example, by funding selected productions and supporting the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra.

The foundation is also continuously active in the Canton of Schwyz, for example with the renovation of **St. Meinrad Chapel** and the construction of the **Landslide Museum in Goldau**. Additionally, for many years it has supported a gala concert as part of the **Zurich Lake Music Summer**, where young talents showcase their vocal skills.



Overcoming boundaries with classical music (from left): Michael Haefliger, former Managing Director and Artistic Director of the Lucerne Festival, and Riccardo Chailly, Music Director.

Riccardo Chailly &
Michael Haefliger

At the Highest Level

Each summer, top musicians from all over the world come together in Lucerne, Switzerland, to form the Lucerne Festival Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Riccardo Chailly, the ensemble's Music Director. He begins every first rehearsal the same way: "Apart from a greeting at the beginning, I let them play an hour and a half so they can find their unique sound. It's something extraordinary." It comes from listening to one another, Chailly notes – a quality that gives the orchestra its unmistakable musical identity. And critics have taken notice, praising the orchestra's "incredibly luxurious sound" and its "peak of orchestral craftsmanship."

The Kühne Foundation has supported the Lucerne Festival Orchestra since 2008 and, since 2020, has served as its main sponsor. Over the years, a close personal relationship has developed between the orchestra and the Kühne family. "You find people like Klaus-Michael Kühne very, very rarely," says former Lucerne Festival Executive and Artistic Director Michael Haefliger, "with his special combination of visionary, entrepreneur, and music lover." With this kind of backing and encouragement by Klaus-Michael Kühne, the ensemble has felt emboldened to move beyond the expected, expanding their programs to lesser-known pieces such as Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony or contemporary works by Wolfgang Rihm.

The outstanding musical moments draw people in, but there's another level to sustaining ensembles like the Lucerne Festival Orchestra. As Michael Haefliger notes, to support orchestras is to invest in society – in access to culture, in education, and in what he describes as an "intense dialogue with humanity." He believes classical music, at its highest aspiration, unites people across borders. And in this ensemble, it truly does: among the roughly one hundred musicians, twenty to thirty nationalities are represented in any given year. As Riccardo Chailly puts it, "The orchestra brings together musicians from many nations in a unity without prejudice, guided only by the wish to make music at the highest level. It is not political, but it naturally becomes a tremendously positive signal."



Lucerne Festival Orchestra

Conductor Claudio Abbado and former Executive and Artistic Director Michael Haefliger founded the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, which gave its first public performance in August 2003. Riccardo Chailly has served as the orchestra's Music Director since 2016. In recent years, the podium has also been graced by such distinguished guest conductors as Herbert Blomstedt, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Bernard Haitink, Jakub Hrůša, Andris Nelsons, Sir Simon Rattle, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Beyond the festival season, its members appear as soloists, hold positions in leading international orchestras, and teach at major conservatories; many also come from the ranks of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and the Filarmonica della Scala.



Tobias Kratzer, Artistic Director of the Hamburg State Opera (top), Bjarke Ingels, Founder and Creative Director of the Bjarke Ingels Group.

Tobias Kratzer & Bjarke Ingels

An Opera House for Everyone

It is still only a vision at this point: a new opera house and public park at Hamburg's HafenCity on the Baakenhöft peninsula. In an international architectural competition, the Kühne Foundation and the city of Hamburg selected the design from the Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG). The renderings show a sequence of terraces shaped by coastal vegetation, creating the impression of gentle ripples – “ripples of sound emanating from the stage,” says Bjarke Ingels, Founder & Creative Director of BIG. Large overhangs and the careful orientation of openings are designed to create wind breaks, ensuring that even in harsh weather the future site will remain welcoming. With its elegant, park-like surroundings, the building and landscape seem to flow into one another. “It will be hard to discriminate where the outside ends and the inside begins,” says Bjarke Ingels. The main auditorium picks up on the idea of ripples of sound, with its tubular timber sections that will line the walls and reinforce the idea of waves emanating from the stage.

Among the jury members who selected the design from BIG was Tobias Kratzer, Artistic Director of the Hamburg State Opera – an organization that the Kühne Foundation has supported for many years. As the person who will ultimately decide what happens on the stage, he was especially drawn to the building's openness and accessibility. And that fits perfectly with how he sees the future of the opera: “As an art form that is open to everyone, not just to the traditional opera-goers.” Tobias Kratzer imagines programming that treats historic works as living material rather than museum pieces. It's about making them relevant for the present – for example through collaborations that introduce contemporary perspectives. He also wants to expand the repertoire with new formats and chamber operas. All of this has the artistic director excited about the possibilities the house will offer. In the end, he takes a democratic approach to programming, giving equal artistic value to historical, contemporary, and experimental works.

The new Hamburg State Opera will be a place of that gives this approach a fitting framework – a place in which nature and architecture, and established masterpieces and bold innovations are brought together. Open to all, it welcomes opera fans – and those who come for the architecture and find their curiosity leading them into the auditorium.



The Gift

Hamburg is to get a new opera house. It will be financed by the Kühne Foundation, while the City of Hamburg provides and prepares the Baakenhöft site and covers location-specific costs. Once completed, the building will be transferred to the city as a gift and the Hamburg State Opera will move there from its current location.



Kiki Fehlauer

A Place of Cultural Identity

Like her husband and many of her friends, Kiki Fehlauer is a big fan of the Elbphilharmonie and regularly attends concerts there. The Hamburg native still vividly remembers her first performance in October 2017, featuring symphonies by Gustav Mahler: “Even the walking into the hall had a special effect on me, and inside, I was captivated by the tranquility, the acoustics, and the unique atmosphere.” By then, the concert hall, which opened in January 2017 and whose construction was co-financed by the Kühne Foundation, had already established itself as a new landmark of the Hanseatic city – a glass crystal atop an old brick warehouse in the heart of Hamburg’s harbor, its facade reflecting the sky and the city. “The Elbphilharmonie embodies openness, self-confidence, and curiosity. It’s an incredibly good fit for Hamburg and makes us Hamburgers very proud,” enthuses the owner and managing director of the Stüllberg Hotel, who is also actively involved in social causes in her hometown.

During her visits to the Elbphilharmonie, she also gets to know the people who ensure the smooth operation of the concert hall. Their professional, dedicated, and warm manner impresses her time and again, and after one season, she knows for sure: she and her husband want to actively support the Elbphilharmonie as patrons. Kiki Fehlauer has had a strong passion for art since her youth; she studied at the Alsterdamm Art School in Hamburg and was herself part of the art scene. She is particularly captivated by the interplay of art and music. “Art encourages reflection, while music, especially singing, creates an immediate connection and emotional intensity. Both allow me to pause in my daily life, to be moved, and to discover new perspectives,” she says. That’s one reason why she’s so fascinated by how naturally quality and openness come together at the Elbphilharmonie – architecturally, acoustically, and in its programming: “As a place that celebrates and promotes culture, it strengthens Hamburg’s cultural identity and has an impact far beyond the city limits. Because culture creates space for encounters, shared experiences, and mutual understanding.”



A Magnet for Music and Architecture Lovers

The Kühne Foundation co-financed the construction of the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and also supported its preliminary concert operations from 2012. In 2017, it supported not only the two opening concerts but also the subsequent multi-week opening festival. From 2014 to 2020, the Kühne Foundation was the main sponsor of the International Music Festival, which has since established itself on the European cultural calendar and enriches the cultural life of the Hanseatic city thanks to its diversity. In 2021, the Kühne Foundation expanded its partnership with the Elbphilharmonie and has since been involved as a principal sponsor.

A springboard for vocal talents: Soprano Martina Russomanno and tenor Tomislav Jukić are two of the up-and-coming talents who have participated in the Young Singers Project.



Martina Russomanno & Tomislav Jukić

Dreams Do Come True

Every summer, for six weeks, the Salzburg Festival turns the city into a stage. In the early evening, women in gowns and men in tuxedos stream toward the venues, eager to hear the world's finest performers. No wonder that for young singers, this festival represents a zenith – reach Salzburg, and you've truly arrived. The Kühne Foundation gives emerging talent a taste of what it means to perform at one of the world's most famous festivals through the Young Singers Project. Coinciding with the festival, it gives them the rare opportunity to experience great artists up close, learn from them in masterclasses, and even perform alongside them.

In 2022, soprano Martina Russomanno, from Italy, was among the participants. She studied opera in Salzburg and was well aware of the privilege to be part of the YSP. "I always imagined what it would be like to be part of this world. Then I was chosen and suddenly I was standing next to the people I had admired for years," she recalls. The program proved pivotal for her early career: she was chosen for a part in Puccini's "Il trittico." During rehearsals other singers noticed her, connections were made, and her first agent relationship grew from this exposure.

Croatian tenor Tomislav Jukić, a participant in the summer of 2025, applied while training at the International Opera Studio in Zurich – which also receives regular support from the Kühne Foundation. He remembers focusing all his energy on the YSP audition, and he could hardly believe his own luck at being accepted. A major highlight was performing in the world premiere of "Musketiere!", a children's opera from contemporary composer Sebastian Schwab. "Because this was an entirely new piece, I could be part of shaping the role from scratch. That's not possible in traditional pieces where a part already has a long history," he says.

Martina Russomanno's dream of the big stage has been there for as long as she can remember – going from pop to the opera she discovered at 14. Tomislav Jukić describes his own path as embracing the moments that came his way, leading him to join a choir at 14 that started him on the road to opera. Both singers say that dreaming is not enough – it takes discipline, persistence, and sweat. And opportunities like the Young Singers Program.



Nurturing Young Talent

Established in 2008, the Salzburg Festival's Young Singers Project (YSP) is a springboard for emerging vocal talent. Numerous auditions are held to select participants from among hundreds of applicants. The successful candidates receive a scholarship, intensive artistic training, and the chance to rehearse and collaborate directly with festival artists. The Kühne Foundation supports the YSP as part of its role as Main Sponsor of the Salzburg Festival. Since 1961, the International Opera Studio at Zurich Opera has been training young opera singers – as a bridge between completing their vocal studies and entering the professional world. Along with receiving further training and participating in master classes with established artists, members have an opportunity to take on roles on the main stage. The Kühne Foundation regularly supports the International Opera Studio and productions at the Zurich Opera.



Father Martin Werlen

Small Chapel with Big Impact

On the Etzel Pass in the canton of Schwyz, just three kilometers from Schindellegi, the headquarters of the Kühne Foundation, stands the small Chapel of St. Meinrad. The frescoes on its ceiling and the altarpiece, depicting Saint Meinrad with Mary and the Christ Child in a forest clearing, tell the story of the hermit's life. For seven years, Meinrad offered advice and comfort to those seeking help before withdrawing further into the forest as a hermit and being murdered by two robbers in 861. Seventy years later, Einsiedeln Abbey was built on this site.

On January 21, 2011, in commemoration of the 1,150th anniversary of Meinrad's death, the Baroque chapel was reopened after being restored to its former glory thanks to the financial support of the Kühne Foundation. "The weather conditions and the dampness at the mountain pass were particularly problematic. Now there's a heating system in the walls," explains Father Martin Werlen, the former abbot of Einsiedeln Abbey. "The chapel holds great significance for the monastic community: the patron saint of the area lived as a hermit on the Etzel mountain, and his heart is buried there. Furthermore, St. Meinrad's Chapel is modeled after the original Chapel of Grace with the Black Madonna by Caspar Moosbrugger, which was destroyed in the abbey church in 1798."

Today, the chapel has a far-reaching appeal, extending well beyond the region. Not only do pilgrims stop here on their journey to Santiago de Compostela, but "many weddings and baptisms are also celebrated here," reports the Benedictine monk. People often stop at the adjacent inn, which continues the tradition of the hospitable St. Meinrad of Einsiedeln, and whose renovation was also part of the Kühne Foundation's project.

St. Meinrad's Chapel is a popular stop in the region. A plaque in the chapel commemorates the extensive renovation carried out by the Kühne Foundation. Father Martin, who has headed the St. Gerold Provostry in Austria since 2020, still fondly recalls the festive opening on Meinrad's name day. Following the tradition of previous centuries, he dedicated the first entry in his newly published chronicle to Klaus-Michael and Christine Kühne, thanking the founding couple "for their steadfast neighborly ties."

The small stones that Father Martin and his fellow nuns from Fahr Abbey placed there during a pilgrimage over ten years ago still lie on the stucco-decorated altar. "This holy place is alive, and I am delighted that everyone contributes to it," he says.



St. Meinrad Chapel

First documented in the 13th century, St. Meinrad Chapel was rebuilt in 1698 according to the plans of the architect Caspar Moosbrugger from Vorarlberg, Austria. The frescoes and stucco work are by local artists Francesco Antonio Giorgioli and Pietro Neuroni. The pilgrims' inn next to the chapel dates back to the 14th century but was rebuilt after a fire in 1759. The two-year renovation of the chapel and inn was the Kühne Foundation's first project for the preservation of cultural heritage; the grant amounted to one million Swiss francs. Furthermore, the Kühne Foundation has supported projects at Einsiedeln Abbey for many years – thus also honoring the region where it has been present for 50 years.



Dr. Jörg Dräger

Solutions to Global Challenges

For 50 years now, the Kühne Foundation has been dedicated to the well-being of society: it identifies relevant issues, initiates projects, builds organisations – and thus drives important developments worldwide in the areas of logistics, humanitarian aid, climate, medicine, and culture.

At the heart of these activities stands our founder, Klaus-Michael Kühne. The foundation uses the proceeds from his impressive entrepreneurial endeavors to find solutions to global challenges. And it is his entrepreneurial principles, consistently applied to the foundation's purpose, that guide the Kühne Foundation:

We take action ourselves – and assume responsibility.

As an operational foundation, we use our resources proactively. Instead of distributing grant money, we develop our own solutions to societal challenges and implement them independently. This is exemplified by our Medicine Campus Davos, where our own research advances precision medicine.

We pay strict attention to efficiency.

The central guiding principle in our projects is a focus on results and cost-effectiveness. Therefore, we concentrate on fields where the greatest possible impact can be achieved with a

reasonable use of resources. And we work – like businesses – with clear goals, professional structures, and the ambition to achieve measurable impact. However, our mission is not to generate profits, but to strengthen the common good.

We bridge temporary market failures and provide start-up support.

We act to close gaps. That's why we operate in areas with innovation and scaling potential where politics or markets are not yet able or willing to act. For example, our allergy research in CK-CARE focuses on better understanding atopic dermatitis – a widespread disease that, despite hundreds of millions of sufferers, is still not sufficiently researched.

We strive for excellence and outstanding solutions.

We concentrate on clearly defined thematic areas in which we aspire to achieve world-class performance. Thanks in part to its clear focus on logistics, our Kühne Logistics University has become one of the world's leading business schools. And in the cultural sphere, we provide targeted support to highly prestigious festivals, opera houses, and concert halls.

Our solutions have a global impact, not just a local one.

We value scalability because our projects are designed to have a global impact. We work on globally relevant topics such as logistics, humanitarian aid, climate protection, and medicine, and involve partners to achieve economies of scale. Together with leading African universities, LEARN Logistics can thus contribute to widespread capacity building within the framework of development cooperation.

We adapt to change.

Humanity faces constant challenges, to which the Kühne Foundation can and must adapt. We recently added climate change to our list of priorities and developed it into a key focus area for our foundation.

Guided by these principles, the Kühne Foundation has achieved a great deal over the past 50 years – thanks in part to its financial resources. The fact that the founder's entire fortune will flow into the organization enables long-term growth and gives the Kühne Foundation the opportunity to develop into one of Europe's most significant foundations in the coming years.

Shaping this growth over the next 50 years in accordance with the founder's wishes and for the benefit of society is both a privilege and a responsibility. In the future, the foundation will continue to use its expertise and resources to develop practical and scalable solutions to global challenges. Whether in logistics, climate protection, humanitarian aid, medicine, or culture: we will continue to use the founder's entrepreneurial success efficiently and purposefully for the common good.

Dr. Jörg Dräger has been Executive Director of the Board of Trustees of the Kühne Foundation since 2022.

Facts and Figures

The Kühne Foundation

33

In 33 countries, the Kühne Foundation, through HELP Logistics, is driving the improvement of supply chains – thereby strengthening humanitarian aid and development work.

1.8 m

The opera houses, concert halls, and music festivals supported by the Kühne Foundation attract approximately 1.8 million visitors annually.

641

In the first two years since the founding of the Kühne Climate Center (KCC), over 600 people have participated in KCC training courses on green logistics in Africa.

42%

Logistics accounts for the largest share of the foundation's funds at 42%. This is followed by medicine (20%), climate (15%), humanitarian logistics (11%), culture (7%), and administration (5%).

5%

The Kühne Logistics University in Hamburg is among the top 5% of business schools worldwide that are accredited by AACSB.

2,300

The Kühne Foundation is expanding its logistics expertise in Asia and Africa through collaborations with 18 universities, where approximately 2,300 students graduate annually.

42

With ten offices in nine countries, the Kühne Foundation implements its international projects in 42 countries.

65 m

In 2026, the foundation's spending will amount to 65 million Swiss francs. The foundation's total budget, including (third-party) funding, will be 135 million Swiss francs.

800

Nearly 800 employees worldwide are driving the Kühne Foundation's goals forward.

500

Five hundred physicians, nurses, researchers, and data experts at the Kühne Foundation are dedicated to medical progress and the rehabilitation of patients in allergology, cardiology, and pulmonology.

11

The Kühne Foundation's activities are overseen by a board of trustees, currently comprised of eleven members.

The Kühne Foundation

The highest governing body of the Kühne Foundation is the Board of Trustees, which is also responsible for the overall management and oversight of its activities.

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