

Press release

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actionuni der Schweizer Mittelbau strives for clear improvements for the non-professorial academic staff at Swiss higher education institutions!

Today, *actionuni der Schweizer Mittelbau* publishes its [position paper](#) on the promotion of young researchers at Swiss higher education institutions. The position paper was drawn up jointly with all members and unanimously adopted at the last delegates' meeting.

Florian Lippke, former Co-President of *actionuni* and member of the Swiss Accreditation Council, commented: *We are aware that every university faces different challenges and that some are already considering approaches to improve the conditions for young scientists in their institutions. However, we know that there are fundamental problems in the Swiss higher education area for non-professorial academic staff, which we must tackle together.*

Problems at Swiss higher education institutions are, among others, the lack of clear career prospects for the mid-level faculty due to short contract terms as well as a lack of permanent positions. This inevitably leads to an overloading of the mid-level faculty with teaching tasks or to a strong dependence on handful of professors.

For this reason, *actionuni* calls, among other things, for career paths to be diversified in order to offer young researchers diversified perspectives for their future. There must be more options than just obtaining a professorship as the only form of permanent employment for scientific positions. In addition, flatter hierarchies and more integrative working models must be created to distribute scientific responsibility among all members of a research team - from doctoral students to professors.

Salome Adam, Co-President of *actionuni* adds: *In addition, non-professorial academic staff must be given participation rights in all areas of policy development at higher education institutions that are of fundamental importance to them, so that we can make our concerns heard.*

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Our positions in a nutshell:

1. **Career diversification at all types of universities and alternative careers** are needed to give young researchers multiple perspectives for their future.
2. **Professional human resources management** will support the separation of administrative from scientific responsibilities.
3. **Double profile research/practice** is seen to be of value for all types of universities, not only Universities of Applied Sciences.
4. **Transparency and career advice** are needed to guide young researchers early on through the jungle of academic and non-academic careers.
5. **Strengthening of flat hierarchies and inclusive work models** will enable us to share scientific responsibilities among all members of the team, from graduate students to professors and chair-holders.
6. **Minimal research time** and fair employment conditions reflect that research is work and must be paid.
7. **Compatibility of scientific careers with family and other obligations** should be self-evident as universities are role models for other employers and society as a whole.
8. **Participation rights** are guaranteed by law and must be supported adequately.

actionuni der Schweizer Mittelbau / actionuni le corps intermédiaire académique suisse / actionuni il collegio intermediario academico svizzero represents early career researchers as well as the associations of non-professorial academic staff of the Swiss cantonal universities, the Federal Institutes of Technology, the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences, and the Swiss Universities of Teacher Education on the national as well as the international level. *actionuni's* objectives are to improve and diversify academic career tracks and to coordinate the activities of the Swiss associations of non-professorial academic staff.