

«Digital Shapers 2026»: Switzerland celebrates its digital visionaries

24.03.2026 Maria Faessler

For the eighth time, BILANZ, Handelszeitung, PME, and digitalswitzerland are honoring one hundred individuals who are significantly shaping digital Switzerland. Tonight, for the first time, they will be celebrated as the “Digital Shapers 2026” at a major gala event.

Eight editions, ten categories, eight hundred honorees. What began in 2016 as a ranking is now the definitive benchmark for digital excellence in Switzerland.

Switzerland is one of the few countries that not only discusses but also actively shapes artificial intelligence. ETH Zurich and EPFL are among the global leaders in AI research. Their findings flow directly into start-ups, which build concrete applications from them. And practically all global AI heavyweights, from Google and OpenAI to Palantir and Meta, have established substantial development departments in this country. This is no coincidence, but the result of years of investment in talent, infrastructure, and research. At the same time, several technology waves are converging: AI, robotics, quantum computing, and the digitalization of critical infrastructures are developing in parallel and beginning to reinforce each other. The «Digital Shapers 2026» reflect exactly this breadth.

This year, BILANZ, Handelszeitung, PME, and digitalswitzerland, together with presenting partner Huawei, are taking the award to a new level: For the first time, the one hundred «Digital Shapers 2026» will be announced in a festive setting tonight at Zurich's Folium.

At the invitation of Ringier CEO Marc Walder, around 200 guests from business, politics, culture, and society will celebrate the 100 honorees. The evening will be accompanied by keynotes from Allen Cao, CEO of Huawei Switzerland, Christoph Aeschlimann, Group CEO of Swisscom, and Federal Chancellor Viktor Rossi.

Marc Walder, CEO Ringier: «Eight editions of «Digital Shapers» are eight years of living proof of how much innovative power this country holds. Artificial intelligence is changing every industry and every area we cover in this ranking: banking, telecommunications, media, medicine, public administration, research, and so on. Switzerland has the minds, institutions, and infrastructure to successfully master this transformation. The individuals we are honoring today prove that.»

Franziska Barmettler, CEO digitalswitzerland: «To advance the digital transformation in Switzerland, we need «Digital Shapers» who provide new impetus and inspire their environment. When the best minds from science, administration, and business from all parts of the country work together on solutions, we secure Switzerland's competitiveness.»

Allen Cao, CEO Huawei Switzerland: «It is a privilege for us to support this project. We can help develop the technological foundations for the digital transformation, but it is the creativity of the «Digital Shapers», the founders, researchers, and visionaries, that transforms them into tangible solutions. They are the forces driving the Swiss economy and society forward.»

Jury with broad support from business, science, and politics

The selection of the «Digital Shapers 2026» was made by a 12-member jury chaired by Marc Kowalsky, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of BILANZ and Project Lead for «Digital Shapers». The jury members include Christine Antlangier-Winter (Country Director Google Switzerland), André Kudelski (CEO Kudelski, President of Innosuisse), and Roland Siegwart (Professor of Autonomous Systems, ETH Zurich). The complete jury list can be found at the end of this release.

After a nomination phase at the end of 2025, the jury selected ten individuals in ten categories from all submissions. Particularly striking: In the AI Acrobats category, women are in the majority. Six out of ten honorees are driving AI development in Switzerland.

«Digital Shapers 2026» – The Who's Who of Digital Switzerland

The AI Acrobats: They are making Switzerland fit for the age of artificial intelligence.

Benjamin B. Bargetzi, Founder & CEO, MindGuard | Chris Beyeler, Managing Director, BEYONDER AG | Cindy Candrian, Co-Founder, Delta Labs | Andy Fitze, Co-Founder, SwissCognitive | Vanessa Foser, Co-Founder & CCO, AI Business School | Sabrina Schenardi, Co-Founder, BLP Digital | Dalith Steiger, CEO, SwissCognitive | Michael Wegmüller, Co-Founder, Artifact | Sabine Wildemann, Co-Initiator, Swiss {ai} Weeks | Katrin J. Yuan, CEO, Swiss Future Institute.

The Androids: They are working on Switzerland's leadership in robots and drones.

Ulrich Amberg, CEO, Swissdrones | Marko Bjelonic, Co-Founder & CEO, Rivr | Raffaello D'Andrea, Founder, Verity / ETH Professor | Péter Fankhauser, CEO, ANYbotics | Florian Gutzwiller, CEO, Voliro | Marco Hutter, ETH Professor and serial founder | Ryan Luke Johns, CEO & Co-Founder, Gravis Robotics | Dominique Megret, CEO, Ecorobotix | Elvis Nava, Founder, Mimic Robotics | Roger Wüthrich-Hasenböhler, Board Member and Advisory Board of various robot startups.

The Cloudriders: They provide applications and infrastructure for the cloud era.

Luca Callegari, Managing Director, Google Cloud DACH | Serge Gansner, CEO, Luware AG | Markus Gebert, Co-Founder & CEO Hostpoint | Elmar Grasser, CTO, Sunrise | Chris Keller, Managing Director Europe Central + ACH, AWS | José Lopez, Group CEO, CONVOTIS | Mohamad Ali Mahfouz, Leading Services Sales, Microsoft Switzerland | Roger Suess, CEO, Green.ch | Andreas Waber, CEO, Swiss Fibre Net | Eric Wolff, CTIO, Salt.

The Defenders: They ensure the security of hardware, software, and data.

Christoph Aeschlimann, CEO, Swisscom | Samir Aliyev, CEO, Swiss Cyber Institute | Christian Cachin, Professor of Computer Science, University of Bern | David Haber, CEO, Lakera / VP AI Security Checkpoint | Kristof Hertig, Senior Program Manager, digitalswitzerland | Thomas Holderegger, Security Lead, Accenture Switzerland | Antti Partanen, CISO Sunrise | Daniel Seiler, Head of Platform Services, BACS | Beatrice Smit, COO, Axpo Systems AG | Andy Yen, CEO, Proton.

The Energizers: They make the generation, storage, and use of energy more efficient through digitalization.

Liliane Ableitner, Co-Founder & CEO, Exnaton | Pierre Bi, CEO, enshift AG | Felix Bünning, Co-Founder & CEO, Viboo | Sébastien Cajot, CEO, urbio | Martin Everts, Managing Director Energy & Mobility, AMAG Group | Giampiero Frisio, Head of Electrification Division, ABB | Hagen Lihl, Co-Founder & CEO, Upgrid | Robert Piconi, Chairman of the Board & CEO, Energy Vault | David Taylor, CEO, Unbound Potential | Yves Zischek, Managing Director, Digital Realty.

The Fintechies: They are taking the financial industry to the next digital level.

Kathrin Braunwarth, CIO, AXA Switzerland | Pascale Bruderer, Founder, Swiss Stablecoin AG | Riccardo Conti, Co-Founder Fume | Johs Höhener, Independent Board Member | Igor Izraylevych, CEO & Founder, S-PRO AG | Lidia Kurt, CEO, BX Digital & Seturion | Adriano Lucatelli, Founder & CEO, Descartes Finance | David Riegelning, CEO & Co-Founder, RULEMATCH AG | Michael Stemmler, Founder, Additiv AG | Hans Peter Wolf, CTO, FNZ.

The Frameworkers: They set the guidelines for digitalization in politics, administration, and associations.

Gerhard Andrey, National Councillor / Board Member Liip | Judith Bellaiche, President, ASUT | Martin Bürki, President, ComCom | Jon Fanzun, CEO, SWICO | Richard P. Hess, Head of Digital Finance, Swiss Bankers Association | Marcel Meyer,

Managing Director, GRdigital and Head of Tourism Department Graubünden, Conters im Prättigau | Lennig Pedron, CEO, Trust Valley | Viktor Rossi, Federal Chancellor | Joanne Sieber, CEO, Deep Tech Nation Switzerland | Karin Taheny, Chief Digital + Technology Officer S-GE.

The Health Techies: They are digitalizing medicine and healthcare.

Lucas M. Bachmann, medignition AG | Verena Barthelmes, Product Manager IoT and Digital Platforms | Romain Boichat, Partner, Rhome | Pascal Chatelain, CCO, Zur Rose Suisse AG | Guillaume DuPasquier, Co-Founder & CEO, Domo.Health | Yalak Garif, Director Digital Innovation, Cisco Switzerland | Lara Gervaise, CEO & Co-Founder, Virtuosis AI | Gregory Inauen, CEO, Grape Insurance | Christine Jacob, Lecturer Health-Tech, FHNW School of Business | Peter Ohnemus, Founder & CEO, Dacadoo.

The Quantum Leapers: They are working on the next IT revolution: quantum computing.

Alexandra Beckstein, CEO, QAI Ventures | Daniel Brau, CEO, Miraex SA | Klaus Ensslin, Professor of Experimental Physics, ETH Zurich | Jonathan Home, Professor, ETH Zurich | Thomas Landolt, CEO, QuantumBasel | Markus Pflitsch, CEO & Founder, Terraquantum | Heike Riel, IBM Fellow & Chief Scientist, IBM Rüslikon | Andreas Wallraff, Team Lead Superconducting Circuits, ETHZ/PSI | Hugo Zbinden, Honorary Professor, University of Geneva | Dominik Zumbühl, Director NCCR SPIN, University of Basel.

The Mentors: They pass on their digital experience as consultants, trainers, VCs, or evangelists.

Andreea Cretu, Head, BioMed Entrepreneurship Programs | Sunnie J. Groeneveld, Managing Partner, Inspire 925 | Arnold Hermann, Co-Founder 42hacks / active investor | Amit Joshi, Professor AI & Marketing Strategy, IMD Lausanne | Pascal Mathis, Partner, Founderful | Max Meister, Koyo Capital AG | Marc K. Peter, Professor of Digital Transformation, HES-SO Valais/Wallis | Romano Roth, Global Chief of Cybernetic Transformation, Zühlke Group | Philipp Stauffer, Managing Partner & Co-Founder, Fyrfly Venture Partners | Stefan Steiner, Co-CEO, Venturelab.

Special issue and coverage The special issue «Digital Shapers 2026» will be published following tonight's evening event. The 108-page magazine, featuring portraits of the honorees, their work, and their motivation, will be included with the print editions of BILANZ, Handelszeitung, and PME.

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Online-Ausgabe

ringier.com/en
8008 Zürich
044 259 60 51
<https://www.ringier.com/>

Medienart: Online
Medientyp: Corporate News

 Webansicht

Auftrag:
1093187
Themen-Nr.:
666014

Referenz:
1bdac89a-de8d-4ef7-8823-06eea3fe1ce2
Ausschnitt Seite: 4/4

