

PRESS RELEASE

New Hospitality Innovation Hub: The City of Lausanne and EHL Group Sign an Agreement

LAUSANNE, Monday 22 October 2018 – The City of Lausanne and EHL Group sign a convention for the development and rehabilitation of the Lausanne neighborhood of Chalet-à-Gobet, to create the first Innovation Hub dedicated to hospitality in Europe.

Signed for an initial period of 50 years by Natacha Litzistorf, Municipal Councilor and Director of Lodging, Environment and Architecture of the City of Lausanne, André Witschi, Chairman of the Board of Governors of EHL Foundation, Michel Rochat, CEO, and Maxime Medina, Chief Asset Management Officer of EHL Group, the agreement will allow EHL to extend its academic ecosystem to construct a hub dedicated to research and innovation, and in support of entrepreneurship.

On the site of the old Chalet-à-Gobet farm, currently being rehabilitated following a fire in 2007, a hostel as well as other surrounding buildings, this new Innovation Hub will host an incubator and several research projects that combine academic research with the flexibility and audacity of young entrepreneurs. This pivotal meeting place, with a restaurant open to the public, reflects EHL's position as one of the global centers for technological research, innovation and competitiveness.

Formerly a fragmented neighborhood that also included a post office, an equestrian center and a café, the project will be implemented in several phases over a period of two to three years to transform it into a coherent, stimulating and dynamic center. The Innovation Hub already includes six start-ups and will also host Lausanne Hospitality Consulting (LHC), the advisory branch of EHL Group. With an initial renovation investment of CHF 25 Mio over the first five years, many synergies are expected to make this hub the reference for innovation in the hospitality and wider services industries.

« Our vision of this new Innovation Hub is to build a place where researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, students, artists and visionaries will come together, exchange and create the future of hospitality. We are creating a new micro-culture that will mirror our University. Flexible and dynamic, this new hub will stimulate creativity.” explained Rémi Walbaum, Chief Innovation Officer of EHL Group.

Michel Rochat, CEO of EHL Group, explained as well that “EHL Group, in addition to its University, has a responsibility to maintain open channels between the various actors that will forge the future of hospitality. Lausanne has a long history of interdisciplinary collaboration, breaking down the barriers that often divide academic institutions and economic actors. That is the spirit of the new Innovations Hub.”

The Lausanne Municipality looks forward to the development of EHL's Innovation Hub at the Chalet-à-Gobet site which will add a new component to the Research and Innovation performed at Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne.



About Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL)

Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) is an ambassador for traditional Swiss hospitality and has been a pioneer in hospitality education since 1893. It has created and inspired a unique professional community of over 25,000 hospitality managers, united by the values and the legacy of EHL.

EHL is a leading university that provides [learning solutions](#) for enthusiastic, talented and ambitious students from 119 different countries. With undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, EHL offers its students a range of on-campus and online education opportunities at different stages of their professional journey.

EHL is regularly recognized as the best hotel management school in the world with the highest graduate employment rates in the industry. EHL is a member of EHL Holding SA, a Group dedicated to hospitality management education.

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