



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich  
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

European Commission  
Dr. Wolfgang Boch  
Head of Unit  
DG INFSO – F1 (BU25-05/24)  
1049 Bruxelles  
Belgium

Zurich, 1 November 2011

## **FuturICT**

Dear Dr. Boch

It is our great pleasure to send you a letter of strong support for the FuturICT flagship project, which is scientifically coordinated by Prof. Dirk Helbing.

FuturICT is at the heart of ETH Zurich's strategic research focus on studying systemic risks and developing new methods for integrated risk management. The recently established Risk Center at ETH Zurich, of which Prof. Helbing is the vice chairman, is considerably extending the activity areas of the previous ETH competence center for "Coping with Crises in Complex Socio-Economic Systems" which was established four years ago by Prof. Helbing, together with five other colleagues. Currently, the ETH Risk Center includes ten professors from five different departments. The center is managed by Prof. Wolfgang Kröger, a distinct expert in the field of safety technology.

The ETH Risk Center was launched in June 2011 and presented to the scientific world as well as to the public in the course of an international workshop on Coping with Crises in Complex Socio-Economic Systems. The establishment of the center did largely benefit from the excitement FuturICT has created for issues in the fields of risk analysis and risk management. As of today, companies like Swiss Re, Zurich Financial Services, AXA, swisselectric and KPMG support the Risk Center with donations amounting at approx. CHF 20 Mio. We consider that as the explicit proof of the fact, that the ETH Risk Center is being perceived by the private industry as an entity of prime importance.

As the Risk Center represents the core of ETH Zurich's commitment within the FuturICT flagship project, the above mentioned amount, exclusively used for the implementation of new professorships and the funding of emerging research projects, can be seen as the contribution of the industry to FuturICT. In the years to come ETH Zurich itself will invest approx. CHF 100 Mio. in new chairs, research projects, infrastructure and the management of the center.

We do appraise FuturICT as an opportunity to upscale the ETH Risk Center activities onto a European and even global level. In fact, one of our evolving strategic lines envisions the establishment of a Singapore-ETH Center for Integrated Risk Management. Respective negotiations are currently in progress. This would enable us to link FuturICT with key players in Asia, and simultaneously – through our physical presence on the Singapore campus – directly interconnect us with projects and activities of other world-leading research institutes.

## **The President**

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ETH Zurich invests CHF 80 Mio. in the upcoming years into the new supercomputing hardware. This high performance supercomputing system, which will be among the most powerful world-wide, will be a key asset for the implementation of FuturICT.

Finally, in collaboration with colleagues from the Computer Science Department, the members of the ETH Risk Center are urging for the implementation of a NCCR (National Centre of Competence in Research) on Socially Oriented Supercomputing.

All these are distinct statements of how much scientific excitement has been created by FuturICT, how much the project has helped to integrate different disciplines at ETH Zurich, and how many new research activities will match the potential EU investment though FuturICT.

Yours sincerely,

ETH Zürich

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Eichler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "R".

Ralph Eichler  
President