

INSEAD

Alumni Association
Switzerland

ANNUAL
MAGAZINE

2025



Contents

03

President's Message

04

News from the School

05

Swiss INSEAD Gala 2024

08

2024 Highlights

12

INSEAD Luxury Forum 2024

14

New Frontiers in AI

16

INSEAD Ski Weekend

18

INSEAD Women in Business

19

IN-BOARD

20

Success Stories

22

INSEAD Alumni Fund

24

Lausanne Chapter

25

Swiss Committee

26

Chapter and Clubs

The INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland at a glance

Join the INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland to network with your peers, learn about the latest trends and innovations in business, and rekindle the INSEAD spirit.

We are here to help you **connect**, **discover**, and **grow**, at every stage of your career.

Don't miss out on our 70+ events across Switzerland, including relaxed get-togethers, panel discussions with leading experts and INSEAD professors, and family-friendly cultural outings.

Our volunteers breathe life into our alumni community. We welcome your suggestions for new events, venues, and topics. Simply get in touch with one of our club and chapter presidents or email us at administrator@insead.ch.

Quick facts

3400+

alumni across Switzerland

70+

events in 2024

5

clubs

- Energy
- Entrepreneurship
- Healthcare
- INSEAD Women in Business (IWIB)
- Private Equity (IPEC)

5

regional chapters

- Basel
- Geneva
- Lausanne
- Ticino
- Zurich

2

career development programs

- INSEAD Board Initiative (IN-BOARD)
- IWIB Swiss Mentoring Program

Editor Viviane Lowe

Designer aminima SàRL, Geneva

Printer Abaecherli Media AG, Sarnen

INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland

www.insead.ch

administrator@insead.ch

Cover picture Novartis Pavillon, Basel.

Designed by Italian architect Michele De Lucchi, the Novartis Pavillon hosts public events and exhibition that explore the future of healthcare. At night, the glass façade lights up in a spectacular artistic display created by 30'000 solar-powered LED cores.

President's Message



Going from strength to strength

As the years go by, I am thrilled to see our Swiss alumni community coming together to grow, learn, and achieve new milestones.

The Swiss INSEAD Gala: A celebration of community

On 13 September, alumni from around Switzerland gathered in Zurich for the flagship event of this year, in celebration of the INSEAD values we hold dear: community, lifelong learning, diversity, and a commitment to be a force for good (see p. 5).

We were honored to welcome Francisco Veloso on his first visit to Switzerland as Dean of INSEAD, along with Prof Annet Aris, who delivered a masterclass on digital disruption. Congratulations to the organizing committee who worked tirelessly over many months to craft an unforgettable evening of glamor, friendship, and fun.

The Lausanne Chapter is born

An important milestone was the birth of our newest chapter in April. Led by Vivek Dogra, MBA'04D, the Lausanne Chapter aims to create strong connections among the sizeable alumni community living and working in the Lake Geneva Riviera region, home to many multinationals and innovative startups (see p. 24).

Exploring vital issues for Swiss companies

Our volunteers outdid themselves in 2024 to bring us 74 social, cultural, and learning events, ranging from new frontiers in energy to advances in gene therapy.

In June, the Geneva Chapter hosted the first INSEAD Luxury Forum in Switzerland (see p. 12). Alumni and professionals joined luxury executives and INSEAD professors to discuss how brands can drive growth in this highly competitive market.

Showing that our alumni have their finger on the business pulse, artificial intelligence was a popular topic this year. In five different events, our chapters and clubs explored the promise and peril of this technology for Swiss industry and society (see p. 14).

The bond between INSEAD and Switzerland is a strong and enduring one. On this note, I wish to congratulate Sven Kado, MBA'72, President of the INSEAD Alumni Association from 2011 to 2015, for becoming a Swiss citizen this year, at the age of 80.

Lastly, it is a special point of pride that in 2024 INSEAD achieved the number one position in the Financial Times (FT) European Business School Ranking, a historic first for the school.

Here's to an inspiring journey of discovery in 2025,

Philippe Mauron

News from the School



INSEAD Master in Management ranked #3 globally by the Financial Times

INSEAD made a strong entry into the Financial Times Master in Management (MIM) Ranking, coming in #3 out of 100 institutions globally in 2024, just three years after its launch.

Designed for early-career professionals, the 14–16 month-long INSEAD MIM combines academic rigor with hands-on learning. The program is recognized for the strong career progression of its graduates and the international learning environment the school offers across its three campuses.

In addition to the MIM's debut at #3, the INSEAD MBA programme ranked #2, and the Executive Education Custom Programmes ranked #1 in their respective 2024 Financial Times rankings. These accolades reaffirm INSEAD's position among the best business schools in the world.



INSEAD launches Global EMBA Flex program

Launching in May 2026, this addition to the school's well-established Global Executive MBA (GEMBA) program enables participants to study wherever they are, while maintaining the same rigorous curriculum and admissions criteria.

The INSEAD GEMBA Flex will kick off with an in-person session at Fontainebleau, followed by a mix of live virtual classes, online learning, and in-person modules. In the second half of the programme, participants will join students from the GEMBA Europe, Asia, and Middle East, Tsinghua-INSEAD Executive MBA, and Executive Master in Finance for a two-week, in-person elective. The programme will culminate with a graduation ceremony at the Singapore campus.



INSEAD survey shows how an MBA can empower entrepreneurs

Some entrepreneurs question the value of investing in an MBA for startup founders. But a recent survey of the INSEAD community shows that, far from stifling the enterprising spirit, getting an MBA has inspired many alumni to more actively pursue entrepreneurship.

The "INSEAD Alumni Entrepreneurship Report 2024" reveals that 73% of students and graduates embarked on an entrepreneurial path after graduating. It is not only budding founders who recognise the value of an MBA: 43% of recent INSEAD graduates were already entrepreneurs before enrolling in business school.

Other insights from the survey include a growing trend among recent INSEAD graduates to incorporate social missions into ventures: 33% of new ventures founded 1 to 15 years ago have a social mission, with an increasing focus on sustainability and healthcare.

Swiss INSEAD Gala 2024

Our alumni's INSEAD spirit made for a truly magical night, graced by the presence of Dean Francisco Veloso on his first visit to Switzerland, while the elegant surroundings of Belvoirpark added a dash of Fontainebleau glamor to the celebration.

By Mafalda Tenente, MBA'06J

Vice-President, INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland

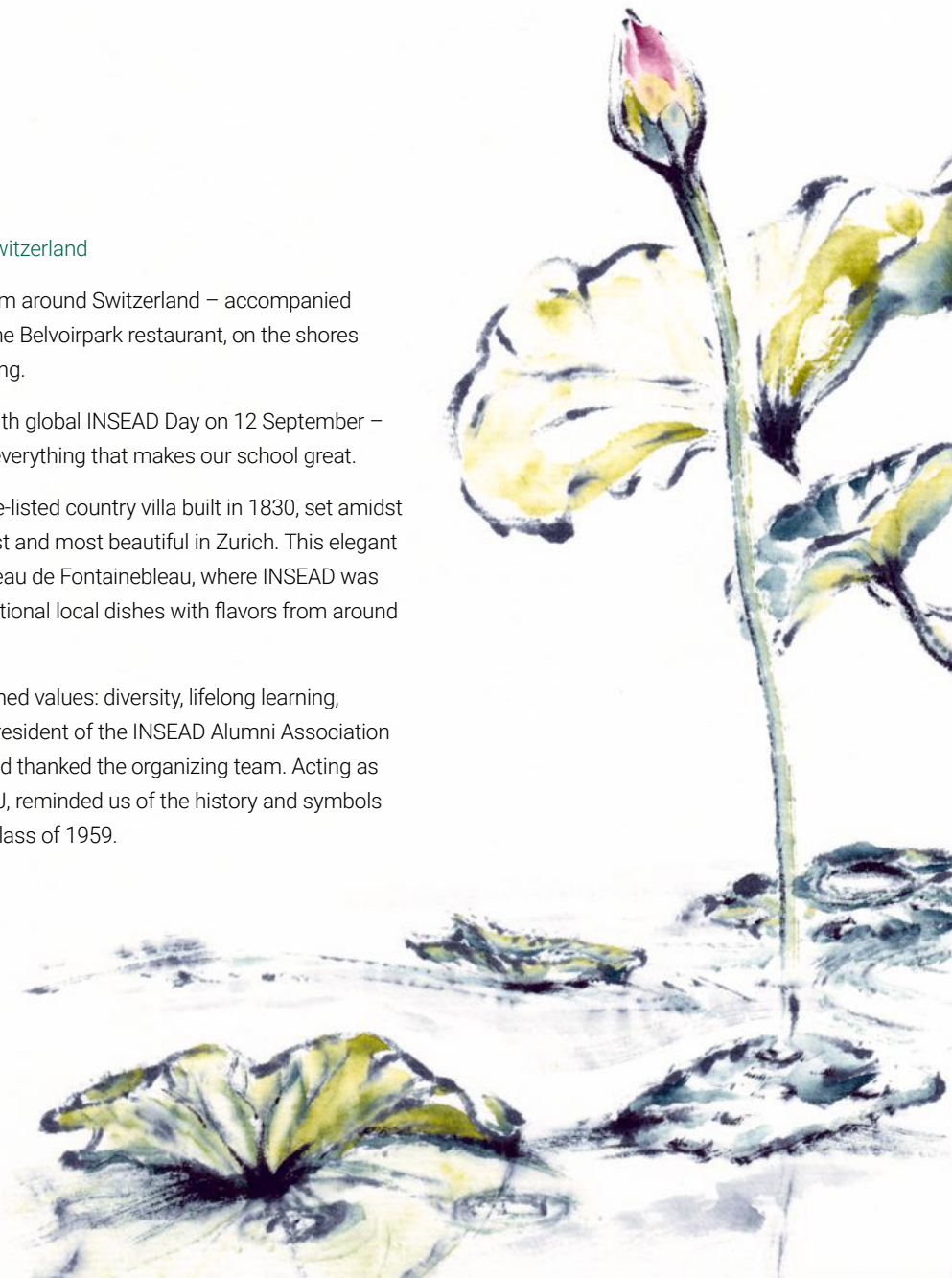
On Friday, 13 September 2024, 185 alumni from around Switzerland – accompanied by their spouses and partners – gathered at the Belvoirpark restaurant, on the shores of Lake Zurich, for an unforgettable gala evening.

The timing of the gala – chosen to coincide with global INSEAD Day on 12 September – enhanced its significance as a celebration of everything that makes our school great.

The Belvoirpark restaurant occupies a heritage-listed country villa built in 1830, set amidst a landscaped garden which is one of the oldest and most beautiful in Zurich. This elegant setting evoked the historic cachet of the Château de Fontainebleau, where INSEAD was born, while the delicious menu combined traditional local dishes with flavors from around the world.

The program dialled up INSEAD's most cherished values: diversity, lifelong learning, and community. Philippe Mauron, MBA'95J, President of the INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland, formally welcomed the guests and thanked the organizing team. Acting as MC for the evening, Mafalda Tenente, MBA'06J, reminded us of the history and symbols of INSEAD, which hark back to the first MBA Class of 1959.

Lotus at the Old Botanical Garden in Zurich,
courtesy of Mafalda Tenente





*What impact
do we hope to have
as a force for good
in the world?*



Dean Francisco Veloso



Prof. Annet Aris

Dean Veloso shared his outlook for the future of the school, which is close to achieving gender parity, with women now making up 42% of the MBA and Master's in Management (MIM) programs. The success of the recently launched MIM, ranked #3 in the world by the FT this year, is a particular point of pride. The Dean then thanked our outgoing INSEAD Alumni Fund Representative Julien Firmenich, MBA'08J, for his contributions in Switzerland and welcomed his successor, Paolo Ciarlariello, MBA'02D.

Annet Aris, Senior Affiliate Professor of Strategy at INSEAD, taught us how to distinguish between digital disruption and transformation. We even took a guess at which Swiss industry is most likely to be disrupted in the near term. Conversations with old and new friends then continued over drinks and dinner.

Zurich-based choreographer Filipe Portugal delivered the biggest surprise of the evening: an intimate ballet piece created especially for the Gala, featuring former Ballet Zurich stars Cristian Alex Assis and Giulia Tonelli. This lyrical moment and the live music throughout the evening inspired guests to step out onto the dance floor until late.

The evening ended on a sweet and hopeful note, with the gift of a limited edition INSEAD *schoggi* and a "postcard from the future" inviting us to reflect on the impact we hope to have as a force for good in the world over the next decade.

We wish to thank our sponsor **Belvoircapital AG** for their generous support, the INSEAD Alumni Relations team for their invaluable assistance, and the organizing team for their creativity and hard work throughout the last year of preparations.



Relive the Gala



view the photos and video of the event



Organizing team

- Mafalda Tenente**, MBA'06J
- Lorenzo Garofano**, MBA'07D
- Stephan Naef**, AMP'10
- Anelia Uzunova**, MBA'15J
- Philippe Mauron**, MBA'95J
- Reto Gygax**, MBA'13D
- Alexander Wyss**, MBA'01D



2024 Highlights

Learning and growing together

Our volunteers organized 74 events this year, offering the Swiss alumni community many opportunities to explore current issues, discover prominent Swiss companies, and connect with each other. Here is a small selection.

January

25th INSEAD Ski Weekend in Verbier

Geneva Chapter

We kicked off the year with a successful jubilee edition of the annual INSEAD ski weekend. No less than 110 alumni and partners joined the dinner on Saturday after hitting the slopes of Verbier during the day.

The sun shone, the snow was soft, and everyone had a blast thanks to the organizational efficiency of Mayssa Scheib, MBA'14J, Geneva Chapter President, Victor Svensson, MCCC'16S, and Eric Escale, EMFIN'23.

How GenAI can create and destroy value and values

Geneva Chapter

More than 50 alumni and guests had the opportunity to hear from from two leading experts in the field of generative AI, François Cadelon, Global Director of BCG Henderson Institute, and INSEAD professor Theodoros Evgeniou.

Organized by Fabio Annovazzi, MBA'90J, and Yves Froppier, YMP'94, the discussion highlighted the disruptive potential of this technology and how businesses can harness it to gain a competitive edge.

Read more on p. 14.

February

Oris watchmaker factory visit

Basel Chapter

A visit to the ORIS factory in Hölstein (BL), provided 18 alumni an opportunity to learn about the history of this local watchmaking champion, founded in 1904. We enjoyed ORIS's new visitor experience tour, showcasing its manufacturing process and the timeless elegance of its watches, followed by networking drinks.

The event was organized by Victor Zambrano, MBA'08D, Basel Chapter President.



Oris watchmaker factory visit

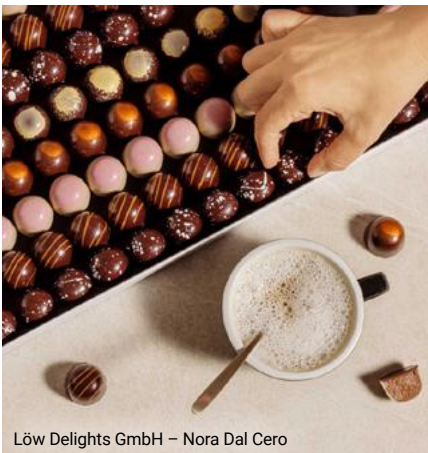
March

Food and Health, with Burgerstein Vitamins and Löw Delights

Entrepreneurship Club

Henrich Greve, INSEAD professor of entrepreneurship, moderated a discussion with two Zurich-based entrepreneurs in the food and health space. Fabia Löw recounted her journey since founding premium chocolate-maker Löw Delights 10 years ago, while Tanja Zimmermann-Burgerstein, CEO of Burgerstein Vitamins, focused on how she transformed the family enterprise from a top-down structure to a modern company where employees share responsibility for decisions.

Around 50 alumni attended the discussion, which was organized by Tobias Vancura, MBA'J06, Entrepreneurship Club President.



Löw Delights GmbH – Nora Dal Cero

Quantum Computing and AI with QuantumBasel

Healthcare Club and Basel Chapter

uptownBasel hosted 20 alumni for a presentation and roundtable on two of the hottest topics in business today. Frederik Flöther (QuantumBasel) joined Chiara Decaroli, and Björn Klocke (University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland) to discuss how quantum technology enables faster data processing, making it especially suited to the large data sets used by AI. Read more on p. 14.

The event was jointly organized by Victor Zambrano, MBA'08D, Basel Chapter President, and Aleks Ruzicic, MBA'97J, Swiss Healthcare Club President.

April

The Human Experience of AI

Geneva Chapter

Inspired by the theories and tools on which the INSEAD's Executive Master in Change program is based, this interactive session allowed 20 alumni to explore their emotional relationship with AI, from its adoption and deployment at work to its impact on our personal lives.

Organized and facilitated by Victor Svensson, EMCCC'16S, Chris Nassivera, EMCCC'21Feb-F, and Frederic Bagutti, EMCCC'18Jul-F, the mini-workshop was followed by an animated networking drinks.

Cully Jazz Festival dinner and concert

Lausanne Chapter

The Lausanne Chapter's inaugural event started with a fabulous dinner at the acclaimed Restaurant de La Gare. The rainy skies cleared, allowing the 32 participants to enjoy a wonderful concert by Kyle Eastwood and his band on the main festival stage, featuring music from many of his father Clint Eastwood's famous movies.

The organizers were Alain Le Berre, MBA'93D, Pascal Prévost, IEP F/F'04J, Lausanne Chapter Vice-President, and Vivek Dogra, MBA'04D, Lausanne Chapter President.



Cully Jazz

May

Renewable energy transition and decarbonization, with Dr. Gerald Scheuer

Energy Club

Dr. Gerald Scheuer, Former Head of Global R&D for MV-Drives at ABB, engaged with a group of 30 alumni on the overlooked challenges of decarbonizing industry, focusing on the importance of power electronics to enable substantial efficiency gains and energy savings.

The presentation was followed by an animated Q&A and networking drinks. The organizers were Ursula Teubert, EMBA'12D, and Marco Montefiori, MBA'05J, Energy Club President.

June

INSEAD Luxury Forum

Geneva Chapter

This first international edition of the INSEAD Luxury Forum brought together over 130 alumni and industry professionals from across Europe for a half-day of panel discussions with INSEAD academics and executives from leading brands.

The event was organized by Odile Astréoud, MBA'15J and Katia Kachan, MBA'16D. Read more on p. 12.



INSEAD Luxury Forum – Illustrative image

July

Generative AI 18 months in panel discussion

Zurich Chapter

A year and a half since the launch of GenAI, and after an initial phase of experimentation with the technology, the focus is increasingly on how to capture real business value.

A panel of data and AI experts shared their insights on how companies in different industries can best approach the challenges of scaling up GenAI, including Ermir Qeli (SwissRe), Christian Sebgondi (Zürcher Kantonalbank), Hal Wehrenberg (Tecan), Mostafa Ajalloeian (Unit8), and Marcin Pietrzyk (Unit8).

The 70 attendees engaged in a far-ranging Q&A with the panelists before breaking for a drinks reception.

The event was organized by Andreas Blum, MBA'15J. Read more. on p. 14.

August

Summer lunch at Société Nautique de Genève

Geneva Chapter

The traditional summer lunch at the prettiest lakeside restaurant in Geneva has been going strong for decades. This year, 20 young – and young-at-heart – alumni enjoyed drinks on the yacht club terrace followed by lunch with a view of sailboats gliding in and out of the marina.

Professionals from various industries engaged in inspiring conversations and shared their experiences, news and plans for the future, from starting a new business to a recent promotion, career transition or relocation.

The event was organized by Dimitri Vaharis, MBA'17J, Ingrida Elijosiute, IEP'07, and Mayssa Scheib, MBA'14J, Geneva Chapter President.

September

Matisse retrospective at the Beyeler Foundation

Basel Chapter

The Basel art scene never disappoints!

A group of 20 alumni headed to the Beyeler for a tour of the French master's first retrospective in Switzerland. Under the expert guidance of a curator, they learned how Matisse redefined painting with his vibrant compositions, inspired by his love of nature and wide-ranging travels.

Organized by Kathrin Amacker, IDP-C'20J and Victor Zambrano, MBA'08D, Basel Chapter President, the visit was followed by a casual dinner at a nearby pizzeria.



Matisse retrospective at the Beyeler Foundation

Swiss INSEAD Gala

Zurich Chapter

The elegant Belvoirpark restaurant on the shores of Lake Zurich was the setting for the main social event 2024: a magical evening of celebration in the presence of the Dean of INSEAD, Francisco Veloso.

Expertly organized by a dedicated team of alumni, the gala brought together 185 alumni and their partners, exemplifying the INSEAD values of diversity, lifelong learning, and community.

Read the article on p. 4.



Summer lunch at Société Nautique de Genève

October

Gene Therapy panel discussion

Healthcare Club

A panel of industry leaders joined 37 participants at the Novartis Basel campus to share their views on the trends, challenges, and hopes of gene therapy.

Claire Grignolo (BeiGene), Jean Christophe Hyvert (Lonza), Markus Staempfli (CSL Behring) and Joshi Venugopal (Novartis) voiced optimism about the future development of these therapies, despite their high manufacturing costs and the work needed to educate the public about the long-term benefits.

The panel was organized by Eric de La Fortelle, MBA'99D, Victor Zambrano, MBA'08D, Basel Chapter President, and Aleks Ruzicic, MBA'97J, Healthcare Club President.



Gene therapy – Illustrative image

INVIGORATE Networking Dinner

IWIB Romandie and Lausanne Chapter

IWIB and the Lausanne Chapter teamed up for the first time to host a networking dinner in Lausanne, with 16 alumni gathering at L'Impression Café. Open to alumni of all genders and promotions, IWIB dinners are designed to stimulate participants' professional and personal development.

The evening was organized by Andrea Ullmann, MBA'10J, IWIB President, Romandie and Vivek Dogra, MBA'04D, Lausanne Chapter President.

November

Tech-driven strategies for private equity success

Private Equity Club (IPEC)

Shahbaz Alam, Global Head of Private Equity at Amazon Web Services, shared valuable insights with 40 alumni on how tech-driven strategies are enabling successful exits for businesses, even amidst challenging market conditions. Shahbaz recently co-authored a paper with INSEAD, "Leveraging Digital, Data & AI Technologies to Increase Enterprise Value".

Organized by Durhan Erturk, MBA'16J, and Martin Spirig, MBA'06J, IPEC President, the evening concluded with a lively networking drinks reception.

AI, robotics and gamification in health

Healthcare Club

Progress in artificial intelligence, robotics, and gamification is accelerating and, increasingly, transforming medicine.

The 30 alumni present engaged in a fascinating exchange on the transformations in medicine that these technologies are likely to unleash, with a panel of experienced entrepreneurs, including Nicole Büttner (Merantix Momentum), Sven Jaeschke (Ahead Health) Max Lungarella (Dynamic Devices), Nilofar Niazi (Nextherapy) and Sebastian Wowra (Digital Doctor House).

The event was organized by Anna Erat, IDP-C'19Sep, and Aleks Ruzicic, MBA'97J. Read more on p. 14.



AI, Robotics & Health – Illustrative image

December

INSEAD team at the Course de l'Escalade

Geneva Chapter

Ready, set... go! After several months of training, nine alumni laced up their running shoes to compete in the madly popular Escalade race, a run through Geneva's old town that commemorates the city's historic victory against the dukes of Savoy in 1502. Congratulations to Doina Cebotari, MBA'13J for organizing this first INSEAD running team!



Course de l'Escalade – Illustrative image

INSEAD Luxury Forum 2024

Over 130 alumni and industry professionals from across Europe joined INSEAD academics and executives from leading brands in Geneva last June to discuss how luxury houses can harness growth in a highly competitive landscape.

Navigating resilience and growth

Setting the scene for the day's discussion, Bain & Company presented a comprehensive analysis of the macro trends and market dynamics shaping the industry.

Luxury's robust post-COVID recovery, led by personal goods and a rebound in tourism in 2023, demonstrates the resilience of the industry. With 400 million current clients and 100 million more expected by 2030, growth will be driven by China (35–40% of the market) and a rising middle class in India and Africa. Another key trend is consumers' growing preference for experiences over material goods. That said, growth in the luxury market is conservatively projected at 1% to 4% in 2024, indicating that challenges remain.

Memorable customer experiences

The first panels brought together experts from watchmaking, healthcare, and beauty, three luxury segments that share a focus on experience to build long-term client relationships.

Panerai engages customers through exclusive, immersive experiences tied to limited-edition watches and emphasizes storytelling over endorsements. Similarly, Clinique La Prairie prioritizes personalized health experiences and technological innovation, especially in the field of genetic testing. Beauty brand L'Occitane seeks to integrate customers' expectations for wellness and sustainability into its retail outlets.

Building trust with digital passports

While technology adoption remains relatively low across the luxury sector, Swiss watchmaking houses such as Breitling illustrate how brands can use emerging technologies to gain a competitive edge.

Digital product passports – in which Arianee has been a pioneer – are a prime example of how blockchain can be used to ensure greater transparency and traceability of products such as luxury watches, but also enhance their tradability in the fast-growing secondhand market. By 2030, all luxury products are expected to come with a digital passport that enables customers to ascertain their authenticity.

The event was organized and moderated by Odile Astréoud, MBA'15J and Katia Kachan, MBA'16D, for the Geneva Chapter, in partnership with EHL Graduate School. The conference was hosted by the Mandarin Oriental hotel and followed by a cocktail dinner during which the guests continued to exchange insights.



Panelists

Cécile Guillot

Associate Partner
Bain & Company London

Jean-Marc Pontroué

CEO, Panerai

David Dubois

Associate Professor, INSEAD

Simone Gibertoni

CEO, Clinique La Prairie

Helene Goetzelmann

VP Client Experience, L'Occitane

Matthias Fuchs

Assistant Professor, EHL

L. Felipe Monteiro

Senior Affiliate Professor of Strategy,
INSEAD

Pierre-Nicolas Hurstel

Founder & CEO, Arianee

Rajesh Shanmugasundaram

CTO, Breitling

Frédéric Godart

Associate Professor, INSEAD

Ian Millar

Senior Lecturer, EHL



Organizers

Odile Astréoud, MBA'15J

Katia Kachan, MBA'16D



Exploring New Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence

This fast-evolving technology was the focus of five events this past year, making it the hot topic of 2024.

Artificial Intelligence fascinates as much as it challenges our understanding of the possible. It has potential to radically speed up innovation in many industries and solve complex problems faster and more accurately than we could have imagined just a few years ago. But it also raises concerns about job displacement and the ethical implications of entrusting decision-making to intelligent agents. Here are a few insights from the alumni and experts who contributed to this multifaceted discussion.

How will quantum computing drive the growth of AI?

Quantum computing will not replace traditional computers but complement them. There are certain classes of mathematical calculations at the core of machine learning/AI models that are both very time-consuming and very energy-intensive when using traditional computer architectures. Quantum computing uses the physical effect of entanglement – a quantum phenomenon – to provide much faster results.

When they become commercially available – in the next five to ten years – quantum computers will make vastly more powerful AI models available for business applications.

Dr. Björn Klocke, MBA'01J

How can businesses harness GenAI to create value?

Two years since the launch of ChatGPT, it has become clear that GenAI is a game-changer across industries.

At Unit8, we've completed over 25 projects in ten different industries, uncovering key trends in practical implementation. Many companies start with two foundational use cases: first, "Safe GPT," which provides employees with secure, ChatGPT-like functionality while safeguarding data and queries; and second, leveraging AI to instantly query internal documents and procedures.

The most forward-thinking clients are using GenAI to create innovative products, such as in the chemical sector, and to automate labor-intensive processes, driving efficiency and transformation, including the use of intelligent agents.

Dr. Marcin Pietrzyk, CEO, Unit8, and **Andreas Blum**, MBA'15J

How can we ensure our use of GenAI reflects our value?

François Cadelon, Global Director of the BCG Henderson Institute, and INSEAD Professor Theodoros Evgeniou led an engaging discussion in Geneva in February about generative AI's potential to spark innovation and streamline operations. Their presentation was balanced by candid talk on the risks of this technology, like job displacement and ethical concerns.

Since then, GenAI has only picked up speed. It's clear that it's now time to dive in and start implementing – don't wait for the next release! With so many advances and rising regulatory interest, taking action today is key to staying ahead and making sure we all take part in shaping AI in a way that reflects our shared values.

Fabio Annovazzi, MBA'90J, and **Yves Fropplier**, YMP'94

How is AI transforming medicine?

Medical knowledge is evolving ever faster, doubling every 73 days since 2020. We are witnessing the emergence of "medicine 3.0", which is predictive, preventive, personalized, and participatory.

AI is key to making sense of increasingly diverse sources of medical data, such as medical records, laboratory tests, and medical imagery. AI is already used to assess images, enhance medical training, optimize digital health services delivery, individualize robotic training, and generate novel hypotheses for medical innovation. It is becoming a stepping stone for longevity, helping us stay healthy for longer.

Anna Erat, IDP-C'19Sep, and **Aleks Ruzicic**, MBA'97J

Artificial Intelligence Events in 2024

25.01

Geneva

How GenAI can create and destroy value and values

Organized by **Fabio Annovazzi**, MBA'90J, and **Yves Fropplier**, MP'94

05.03

Basel

Quantum computing and AI

Organized by **Victor Zambrano**, MBA'08D, and **Aleks Ruzicic**, MBA'97J

18.04

Geneva

The human experience of AI

Organized by **Victor Svensson**, EMCCC'16S

10.07

Zurich

GenAI 18 months in: How to bring tangible value to enterprises?

Organized by **Andreas Blum**, MBA'2015J

28.11

Zurich

AI, robotics, and gamification in medicine

Organized by **Anna Erat**, IDP-C'19Sep, and **Aleks Ruzicic**, MBA'97J

The INSEAD Ski Weekend in Verbier

First organized in 1999 by a group of Geneva alumni, this beloved annual tradition is still going strong after 25 years.



By **Audrey Barchha**, MBA'78

The idea of organizing a social weekend on the slopes germinated when three members of the Geneva chapter committee, all keen skiers, decided to plan a trip for their fellow alumni and test the response. Initially, organizers attempted to book both hotels and restaurants. However, that turned into an logistical nightmare when participants changed their minds at the last minute, either cancelling because of a bad weather forecast or asking to be included in an already fully booked weekend when it looked like the sun would make an appearance.

It was then that Denis Harran, MBA'81, Andrew Hunziker, MBA'93D, and I came up with the winning formula that is still in place all these years later. The organizers would **reserve restaurants for the Friday and Saturday** evenings, coordinate **optional ski groups on Saturday**, and arrange access to **Verbier's world-famous night-life** for those with energy left to party, while participants would be responsible for their own accommodation.

The first ski weekend in 1999 attracted fewer than ten participants. The weather wasn't great, and some were more interested in enjoying a relaxed weekend in the mountains than skiing Verbier's notoriously challenging slopes. The following year the weather was fine and around 20 mostly advanced skiers from the Geneva area enjoyed a very fun weekend.

Word spread fast, and in future years participants came from across **Switzerland**, then **France, Germany, the UK, and even Canada**.

We did our best to keep track of participants, but at times 50 people showed up for a dinner reservation for 30, causing major headaches for small restaurants and their often rather inflexible owners!

In 2024, with **over 100 participants** at the Saturday dinner, the formula remains the same. The Geneva committee does a remarkable job of organizing the weekend. Skiers are divided into volunteer-led groups according to level, and activities such as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and walking are available.

Of all 25 editions of the Ski Weekend, only two or three have been marred by bad weather – a remarkable track record. Let's hope that this is another Swiss INSEAD tradition that will remain unchanged for many more years!



Ski weekend founders Andrew Hunziker (left), Audrey Barchha (4th from left), and Denis Harran (right), with the organizers of the 2024 edition.



From Heels to Sneakers

What has changed for INSEAD alumna in the past 50 years? Christine Wullemin MBA'76, and Amanda Michel, MBA'22J, shared their experience of the school and the workplace.

When Christine Wullemin, a lawyer by training, attended INSEAD in 1976 she was one of only 12 women in her year. Since then, she has combined her love of the law and of business in a career spanning New York, Zurich, and finally Geneva, where she has her own practice. She sat down with fellow alumna Amanda Michel, a consultant at Bain & Co. in Zurich and a former laureate of the Swiss MBA scholarship.

Amanda: What was it like to be one of 12 women in the MBA program in 1976?

Christine: If you've seen the Barbie movie, you may remember when she takes off her high heels for the first time and puts on trainers. That's the story of my life! When I joined INSEAD, I was a real Parisienne: always very feminine, with high heels, makeup, nice clothes. At the time, a woman was expected to get married and have children. Then, if you had time, you might work. So, as women, we had to struggle with ourselves, first, to put work ahead of family. Then we had to fight to be taken seriously, as men weren't used to women pursuing a career in business.

My year at INSEAD was really difficult. We used Harvard cases, and I wasn't fluent in English, so I had to work extra hard. Most students were living in different hotels in Fontainebleau, so we were quite isolated. I think as women we were mainly looking for recognition from our male peers, because we knew they would become the managers of tomorrow and could be helpful to our career.

A: I don't think I ever wore heels at INSEAD! We've come a long way from that perspective. When I was there, women made up almost 40% of the MBA class. What struck me most was all the different ways we women managed to connect. There was a lot of intentionality about going for a walk and talk, exercising together, going to Paris for a coffee. The women with whom I've stayed close were very intentional in forming these bonds. There's a lot of strength there.

In Switzerland, however, I think it's still an uphill battle for women. Our system isn't designed for couples who both work full time. When you look at the way we are taxed, the availability of childcare, the number of women in management, there is quite a gap. The glass is still just half full.

Can you tell us more about the role male allies played in your career, and how you hope men of my generation might change?

C: Because we had to fight so hard to be allowed in, we were looking for support from our bosses. I was lucky to work for men who were open to women in management. But for much of my career, I never had a meeting to discuss my future in the company. As women, we didn't dare say a word, we just felt lucky to be there. I think today, women are much more open to saying "this is where I would like to go with my career, this is the salary I want".

I spent the last 11 years of my career at a private bank in Geneva. I felt fully at home there, because it was so international. Also, the men I was working with were a different generation, and much more open to working with and for women. That's when I finally took off my high heels!

A: What's your shoe of choice today?

C: Somewhere between high heels and trainers. With high heels, usually you wear a dress or a skirt, when in fact, I find trousers and flats or low heels much more comfortable and convenient for work. What you wear isn't meaningless: it shows that you have freedom of choice.

INSEAD Board Initiative (IN-BOARD)

Designed by alumni for alumni, IN-BOARD is an INSEAD executive education program for those who intend to take up a board role or have already done so.

Global mindset, local expertise

The program starts with an intensive weekend session in Fontainebleau, in November or December, led by Prof. Erik van de Loo and Prof. Jaap Winter, which provides alumni from across Europe with a strong grounding on international best practices.

Between January and June, the 12 Swiss participants convene in Zurich for five modules led by experts, startup investors, and experienced board members. The half-day sessions focus on legal, strategy, people, reporting, and startups, and are followed by a lively dinner with the trainers.

Swiss knowledge partners

Baker McKenzie (legal), McKinsey & Company (strategy), Egon Zehnder (people), PwC (reporting & audit) Balz Roth and Jean de Wolff (startups).

INSEAD faculty

Erik van de Loo, Affiliate Professor of Organisational Behaviour, INSEAD
Jaap Winter, Visiting Professor of Corporate Governance, INSEAD



"The training is very holistic: I gained a lot of varied insights on many different topics, from different people, and in different settings. The dinners were an important part of the program too. Very INSEAD style!"

Ines Kljucar, EMBA'13Dec

INSEAD IN-BOARD Certificate

Develop the knowledge, insight and global mindset to be a great board member

Cost

CHF 6,800 – includes 5 dinners in Zurich

Maximum participants

12 Swiss INSEAD alumni

Registration

September 2025 for the
November 2025 – June 2026 intake

For more
information



or go to
insead.ch/in-board

If you are interested in participating, contact **Matthias Frieden**, Head of IN-BOARD Switzerland, matthias.frieden@gmail.com

Alumni Success Stories

Celebrating the leadership and entrepreneurial spirit of our Swiss alumni.



Carolina Cardoso de Almeida, MBA'16J

Brazilian-born Carolina left her corporate career to train as a coach and founded Hikes of Life in 2022. She now combines her two passions, helping people to grow and connecting with nature, by offering leadership workshops and executive coaching sessions while hiking in the mountains near her home in Luzern.



Radoslav Vasilev, MBA'12J

In late 2023, Radoslav became Group CFO at SDS Swiss Dental Solutions, a company specializing in biological dentistry and ceramic implantology. Since then, he has been guiding the transformation of SDS from a founder-led business into a thriving portfolio company of Gilde Healthcare, a leading private equity firm.



Laurent-Dominique Piveteau, MBA'01D

Laurent-Dominique was named Professor of Practice at EPFL's College of Management of Technology in 2024. This new position – there are only three at EPFL – combines teaching and supervising master's students with strengthening links between industry and academia. He is also CEO of Debiotech, a Lausanne-based medical device company.



Laurence Amand-Jules, MBA'99D

Laurence recently joined the Board and the Risk and ESG Committee of Ateame, a French listed group and leader in video technology. She also chairs the Finance and Audit Committee of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, a Swiss foundation present in 16 of the most vulnerable countries in the world.



Michael Ungerer, EMBA'18Dec, IDP-C'19Feb

During the pandemic, Michael built a luxury boutique cruise company, Explora Journeys, from the ground up, drawing on his 30 years in the luxury hospitality and the cruise business. Focusing on sustainable luxury, the company launched the second of its planned six ships in 2024, to rave reviews from guests and media.



Vay Luy Jetzer-Chung, MBA'13D

Vay Luy was recently named Director of Marketing and Member of the Executive Board of Fresenius Kabi Switzerland. She previously held executive roles with Roche Global, Novartis, and Eli Lilly. She credits her INSEAD MBA for her successful transition from a career in the Federal government to the pharma industry 10 years ago.



Fabio Fagagnini, Beat Brägger, and Lukas Gayler, MBA'12D

Inspired by their shared INSEAD journey, Fabio, Beat, and Lukas founded an investment partnership shortly after graduating. They acquired a first orthodontics device company, Mikrona, followed by Ortho Walker in 2019. Last year, they sold the group to a large private equity firm, with Fabio serving as CEO of the acquiring entity, Healthcare Holding Schweiz.



Andy Schwarzenbach, IDP-C'21 Oct

Andy was elected in 2024 to the Board of Directors of Hiltl, Enzler Group, and Mosterei Möhl, all fourth or fifth generation family businesses. He is the founder of healthy fast-food chain Hitzberger, which he sold to Migros in 2017, and currently serves as an independent director for several scale-ups, SMEs, and large companies.



Diana Denke, MBA'17J

With 10+ years in strategy and innovative finance, Diana co-founded Fair Carbon in 2023 to accelerate the restoration and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems. Fair Carbon delivers scalable blue carbon projects that enhance biodiversity, engage frontline communities, and leverage opportunities in the voluntary carbon market.



Roger Kollbrunner, MBA'94J

After selling the industrial holding company he founded, Roger started again from scratch in 2024. His new company, Nolex AG, focuses on "succession-stage" companies in Switzerland and Germany. Founded with CHF 13 million, Nolex currently has 17 investors and has bought two companies so far, PICCA Bausysteme and Maibach VuL.



Sascha Nick, MBA'90J

After many years as an executive and the founder of four start-ups, Sascha completed a PhD in systems science, and now researches how we can move as a society towards sustainability. Recently, he co-led a group of 45 Swiss scientists in publishing an IPCC-style Assessment Report 2024 on renewable energy and biodiversity in Switzerland.



Patrick Koller, GEMBA'16E

Patrick founded Matchspace Music in 2020 to transform music education by connecting students with expert teachers. The company quickly became Switzerland's largest platform for music lessons and has recently secured a three-year contract with a major public music school for its new B2B SaaS offering. It is now raising a seed round to fund its international expansion.

Alumni of Switzerland Endowed Scholarship Fund

Taking action through giving.



I am honored to take the baton from Julien Firmenich, MBA'08J, who as President of the INSEAD Alumni Fund Switzerland since 2021 was instrumental in motivating our alumni community to surpass our giving objectives year after year.

As the new IAF President for Switzerland, my mission will be to convince alumni to donate to INSEAD as a form of engagement with the school. INSEAD does need the support of all of us to remain competitive at a global level as one of the world's leading business schools.

Most of your donations last year were directed to the Dean's Fund and scholarships, in particular the Swiss Alumni Endowed Scholarship, which gives deserving Swiss students the opportunity to achieve their educational dreams and create a brighter future.

Thank you for your generosity which enables INSEAD to attract talented students and keep research relevant and cutting-edge.

Paolo Ciarlariello, MBA'02D
President, INSEAD Alumni Fund Switzerland

Swiss Alumni Giving Day 2024

Inspired by the 2024 Olympics in Paris, Giving Day 2024 embraced the theme "Team Up for Change", honouring teamwork, determination, and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

On this day, our Swiss alumni came together like relay runners, passing the baton forward, from person to person, across INSEAD classes, and around the world.

Force For Good Campaign 2024



€ 1.8 Mio
raised

3,288
donors



€ 252,000
raised

146
donors

#2
total
donations

#7
alumni
participation

Swiss scholarships

Thank you to all the donors whose gifts helped grow the Alumni of Switzerland Endowed Scholarship Fund to €1.305 million (31 July 2023). Your generosity has enabled us to award 12 Swiss Scholarships and 3 Tech Entrepreneurship Scholarships since 2016.

2024 scholarship recipients



Simon Wild, MBA'25J
Swiss Scholarship

I am incredibly grateful to have been awarded the Swiss Scholarship, which has significantly enriched my journey at INSEAD. It not only eased the financial burden, allowing me to focus more deeply on my studies and entrepreneurial interests, but it also opened doors to invaluable opportunities. It has empowered me to dive deeper into understanding various industries, connect with an incredible global network of peers, and explore new avenues in consulting and beyond. I am particularly excited about the possibilities that lie ahead as I work towards positively impacting society through the insights and experiences gained here.



Camille Tistounet, MBA'24D
Swiss Scholarship

This year at INSEAD has been a life-changing adventure, from forging friendships with exceptional individuals from around the globe to engaging with accomplished alumni who inspire new ambitions. I have had the privilege to dive into a wide array of subjects with esteemed professors and to join the leadership of the PE/VC club. This experience has been invaluable in building a bridge between my background as an M&A lawyer and my aspirations to work in investment after my MBA. Receiving this prestigious scholarship has helped make this adventure possible and I am sincerely grateful for it.



Daniel Hess, MBA'24D
Swiss Tech Entrepreneur Scholarship

The scholarship played a pivotal role in enabling me to deep-dive into the curriculum. I also discovered that INSEAD is about much more than just academics. Studying here has given me a sense of belonging, fostered friendships, and opened doors to valuable connections that have enriched my experience. I dedicated time to the AI and Healthcare clubs, engaging deeply with peers who share my passion to solve the problems facing our world. I'm grateful for this opportunity and look forward to giving back by supporting future recipients of this scholarship.

INSEAD MBA Scholarships at a glance



36%
of MBA students are women



36%
MBA students receive a scholarship



92
nationalities



€ 8 Mio
total scholarship funds



€ 22,000
average scholarship



44%
of scholarship recipients are women

Welcome to our Lausanne Chapter

Our youngest chapter has been buzzing with activity since its official launch in April 2024.

By **Vivek Dogra**, MBA'04D, Lausanne Chapter President

The idea first germinated over coffee and croissants in the summer of 2023, when Pascal Prevost, IEP F/F'04Jun, and I wondered what it would take to bring together INSEAD alumni living in the Riviera region between Lausanne and Montreux, as an alternative to travelling the considerable distance to events in Geneva, Basel, or Zurich.

The project gained traction over a series of informal dinners in the following months, where we found willing volunteers in Lena Beckerleg, MBA'86D, Susanne Janssen, MBA'96J, Alain Le Berre, MBA'93D, and Clément Rey, MBA'09J.

The chapter held its first official event at the Cully Jazz festival in April 2024. Highlights of this past year include a guided walk and wine tasting in the Lavaux vineyards, a garden barbecue overlooking Montreux, drinks in Lausanne, a dinner by the lake in Lutry, the beloved INSEAD tradition of random dinners hosted by alumni, and mulled wine and fondue at the Montreux Christmas market.

The Chapter's WhatsApp group currently has 150+ members and over 12 events are planned for 2025. The aim is to create a thriving and engaged community that interacts frequently, creates opportunities for professional and personal growth, and participates actively in creating memorable events in this fabulous part of Switzerland.

Meet our new Chapter Presidents



Vivek Dogra, MBA'04D
Lausanne Chapter President

I started my career as a beer salesman in Asian markets and, thanks to INSEAD, made the transition to venture capital, with a focus on sustainability in Europe. When I moved to Switzerland in 2007, I took up the challenge of learning both French and skiing – I'm happy to report significant progress on both fronts! My wife Aparna (EMCCC) and daughter Leona (Summer@INSEAD) are also part of the INSEAD family. INSEAD is a life-long learning platform for me: I've been back recently for the IN-Board and P6-Sustainability programs. I hope to see you at one of our Lausanne Chapter events in 2025!



Mayssa Scheib, MBA'14J
Geneva Chapter President

When I arrived in Geneva in 2015, I felt an instant connection with the city and knew I had found my home away from home. Having always worked for Swiss private banks, it was easy to connect with people in the industry. But they say that variety is the spice of life, which is why I joined the INSEAD Alumni Association and took part in several events. I enjoyed these – and all the beautiful people I met – so much that I decided to give back, first by organizing social events and now as Chapter President. Here's to many more events to come!

Swiss Committee



Philippe Mauron, MBA'95J
President



Mafalda Tenente, MBA'06J
Vice President INSEAD Women in Business
Club President, Zurich



Oengus Ramsay, MBA'95D
Treasurer



Nick Bischofberger, MIM'22
Young Alumni Representative, Zurich



Emilie Jacot-Guillarmod, MBA'20J
Young Alumni Representative, Geneva



Paolo Ciariariello, MBA'02D
INSEAD Alumni Fund President,
Switzerland



Alexander Wyss, MBA'01D
Ex-Officio

Chapters and Clubs



Victor Zambrano, MBA'08D
Basel Chapter President

The Basel Chapter serves around 200 alumni living in Basel, many of whom work in the region's thriving healthcare industry. We aim to build a strong alumni community through frequent networking and speaker events, cultural visits such as our annual Art Basel tour, wine-tasting nights, and family-friendly activities.



Reto Gygax, MBA'13D
Zurich Chapter President

The Zurich Chapter's busy events calendar includes cultural outings, panel discussions, company visits, and an annual golf tournament. Our regular afterwork networking drinks are an opportunity to make new connections.



Alessio Ascari, MBA'94J
Ticino Chapter President

Catering to alumni living in the Swiss-Italian border region, the Ticino Chapter aims to build ties with alumni communities in Northern Italy. We are actively looking for new volunteers to join the chapter.



Dean Veloso and Prof. Annet Aris with the Swiss Committee and INSEAD Gala organizing team.



Andrea Ulmann, MBA'10J
INSEAD Women in Business Club (IWIB)
Vice-President Geneva

The INSEAD Women in Business Club (IWIB) aims to advance gender parity in business through learning, and networking. Our activities include the IWIB Mentoring Program, speaker events and regular networking lunches and dinners in Geneva, Lausanne, and Zurich.



Marco Montefiori, MBA'05J
Energy Club President

The Energy Club organizes site visits, thematic talks, panel discussions, book launches, and cross-club events, with the aim of stimulating critical thinking on crucial aspects of the energy system, such as the energy transition, carbon neutrality, and sustainable business models. The team includes Didier Duret, IDP-C'19Sep, Ursula Teubert, EMBA'12Dec, and Alexander Stadelmann, MBA'20D.



Aleksandar Ruzicic, MBA'97J
Healthcare Club President

The Healthcare Club organizes speaker events and panel discussions with healthcare executives, experts, and INSEAD professors. The popular healthcare drinks launched in 2022 by Nataliia Boiko, MBA'19J, will continue in 2025. The team includes Laurent-Dominique Piveteau, MBA'01D, Kristie Vuong, MBA'18D, and Zoë Billinghamurst, MBA'02D.



Martin Spirig, MBA'06J
INSEAD Private Equity Club (IPEC) President

IPEC events are an opportunity for alumni to learn about trends and challenges in the private equity industry and to network with entrepreneurs, experts, and leading practitioners. The team includes Katja Berlinger, MBA'05, Richard Bissonnet, MBA'81, Konstantinos Dermanis, MBA'13J, Martha Heitmann, MBA'07, and Théodore Sarasin, MBA'21J.



Matthias Frieden, MBA'05J
Head of IN-BOARD

IN-BOARD is an executive board education program designed for INSEAD alumni who intend to take up a board role or have already done so. Every year, 12 Swiss alumni learn about best practices from INSEAD faculty and experienced Swiss board professionals and business leaders.



Tobias Vancura, MBA'06J
Entrepreneurship Club President

The Entrepreneurship Club organizes events for alumni interested in networking and sharing experiences on topics such as starting a company, taking over a company in a succession scenario, transitioning from the corporate world to business ownership, or becoming a business angel.

Next events in 2025

06.02

**Protectionism &
competitiveness panel**

Lausanne

20.02

**Wine tasting &
charity fundraiser**

Riehen

04.03

Afterwork drinks

Zurich

12.03

IWIB networking dinner

Lausanne

13.03

IWIB networking lunch

Zurich

13 – 20.03

Giving Day events

Switzerland wide

18.03

**Broadening the nuclear debate:
Medical and energy applications**

Genolier, VD

20.03

Medtronic company visit

Lausanne

27.03

Boréal Coffee founder talk

Geneva

03.04

Afterwork drinks

Zurich

09.04

State of the Private Equity Industry

Zurich

16.04

**Luxury in 2025: Strategies
for Resilience, hosted by Bulgari**

Geneva

23.05

Afterwork drinks

Basel

04.06

IWIB networking dinner

Geneva

05.06

IWIB networking lunch

Zurich

11.06

**The future of the Swiss energy
system, hosted by Axpo**

Baden

14.06

Lavaux walk and sip

Lausanne

21.06

**Art Basel guided tour
and dinner**

Basel

Stay informed

Each year, the INSEAD Alumni Association Switzerland offers alumni more than **70 opportunities to connect, discover, and grow.**

Go to insead.ch to register for upcoming events or contact administrator@insead.ch to receive invitations by email.

