

Mittelbauorganisation Universität Luzern (MOL)
Mid-level Organisation University of Lucerne (MOL)

Annual Report 2023/2024

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1 Elections and Finances

1.1 Board elections – until July 31, 2025

- Lea Keller has been elected as the Treasurer.
- Katharina Dölp has been elected at the seat of the Faculty of Economics (WF)
- Alexander Ort (GMF), Aline Leimann (RF), Antonia Steigerwald (KSF), Tess Bardy (VPF) are reconducted until July 31, 2025.
- TF seat is dormant until May 22, 2024
- 1st reviewer is vacant
- 2nd reviewer: Noel Ackermann is elected

1.2 Elections: Representatives in UniLU working groups and commissions – until July 31, 2025

- Senate: Alexander Ort, Markus Schreiber, Desiree Waibel
- Senate (REPL.): Antonia Steigerwald
- ActionUni: Natalie Messerli
- ULEKO (REPLACEMENT) – teaching commission: vacant
- GLK (REPLACEMENT) – equal opportunities commission: Katharina Dölp
- FoKo (REPLACEMENT) - research commission: Daniel Allemann (elected)
- NHK – sustainability commission: Lea Keller
- Echo-Group Mensa: Lea Keller
- QS – quality commission: Antonia Steigerwald
- QS (REPLACEMENT) – quality commission: vacant

1.3 Financial report

The financial reports (annual financial statements and budget) will be presented at the General Assembly on May 22, 2023, by the treasurer Lea Keller. The financial report is reviewed by the MOL auditor, Noel Ackermann.

2 Activities of the MOL board

2.1 Board and MOL Meetings

This chapter will focus on the meetings and activities of the board and its interaction with MOL members.

Monthly Board Meetings: The board meets monthly to discuss current topics, plan, and coordinate its activities. These meetings provide a platform for board members to stay informed about the organization's operations and make strategic decisions.

MOL-Board Retreat: In January 2024, the MOL board held a two-day retreat to reevaluate various aspects of organizational work, review past and ongoing projects, and plan future activities. This retreat allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the organization's direction and objectives.

MOL Survey Influence: The current and future work of the board, as well as the target topics and issues, are significantly influenced by the results of the MOL survey. This survey has garnered substantial attention and resonance within the university's rectorate, faculties, and various other university groups. It serves as a valuable resource for aligning the board's initiatives with the needs and priorities of the university community.

MOL Meetings: The board also organizes informal meetings with MOL members throughout the semester. These gatherings provide opportunities for discussions, networking, and collaboration. The monthly MOL meetings have become fixed events during the semester, and they continually attract new members. The following individuals are invited: MOL representatives, MOL board members, assistants, faculty representatives, as well as anyone interested (e.g., members of a MOL working group). The meetings are published on the MOL website and in the InfoMail, allowing other interested parties to participate as well.

The board has introduced thematic or focused discussions for these meetings, such as exploring career paths within and outside academia (Fall term 2023) or addressing communication and self-presentation skills for academics (Spring term 2024). Their success has been reported by the MOL. The MOL members have reported their success, and the MOL board will check with the Graduate Academy Fall to take over similar meeting organizations in Fall 2024 and later.

2.2 Regular exchange with faculties, representatives, and other bodies of the university

The board actively seeks to engage in dialogue with various university bodies, including the Student Organization (SOL), the Administrative and Technical Organization (ATOL), MOL representatives, the IT and communication department, and the Graduate Academy. To foster and maintain these exchanges, MOL organizes regular meetings (typically once per semester) with each of these bodies. Additionally, the MOL meets with the University Management and administration.

2.3 National activities

The MOL is not limited to activities within the University of Lucerne but extends its reach to national initiatives. The MOL continues to actively support the activities of actionuni and concrete projects such as Petition Academia and the Better Science Initiative, as well as the national launch of the Mental Health Survey.

2.4 Past, ongoing, and future projects (based on the retreat slides)

The work of the MOL focuses on four closely related areas of action, shortly described hereafter. This section also gives an overview of past, ongoing, and future projects in the respective fields, which are carried out in addition to the MOLs regular activities in.

- **Participation in Decision Making:** This working area focuses on enhancing the involvement of MOL board and its members in decision-making processes within the university. It includes efforts to improve the quality of decision-making, streamline administrative procedures, and ensure that the voices of early career researchers are heard regarding key academic matters.
 - **Ongoing:** The MOL collaborates closely with the quality management commission to enhance the research quality and its evaluation. This included regular meetings with stakeholders, providing feedback to improve processes (e.g., PhD dropout rates). The MOL is further actively involved in recruiting representatives (incl. ActionUni, Senate, WF, VPF, FoKo, etc.)
- **Represent & Engage:** Representing and engaging with stakeholders, both within and outside the university, is the primary goal of this area. It involves advocating for recognition of the MOL's contributions, fostering strong relationships with faculties and administrative bodies, and facilitating opportunities for MOL members to engage in meaningful academic and administrative activities.
 - **Past:** The MOL Board has pushed its work recognition to the higher university bodies. The MOL further initiated the creation of job reference letters to acknowledge the valuable contribution of its representatives and board

members considering their career development. Finally, the MOL has advocated for the implementation of the Swiss National Fund's (SNF) 10% rule, which promotes academic engagement alongside administrative responsibilities.

- **Ongoing:** The MOL promotes the engagement of all faculties and their members, administrative bodies, and working groups. The strategy includes regular informal meetings. The MOL also aims to actively participate in the Dies Academicus celebration and to get recognized by, e.g., the inclusion in the annual report, strengthening its visibility. The MOL continues ongoing projects. It tries to engage the Economic faculty and the new faculty (VPF) within its activities. The MOL has shown that the development of MOL meetings based on career development strategies in Fall 2023 and self-development in Spring 2024 are appreciated by the MOL members.
- **Future:** The MOL will continue its ongoing projects, including the promotion of young academics at the University of Lucerne.
- **Communication & Coordination:** Effective communication and coordination are vital for the smooth operation of the MOL. This area focuses on maintaining transparent communication channels, disseminating information to members through various means such as goodies and hoodies, and exploring opportunities for sponsorships and alumni engagement to support MOL activities.
 - **Past:** The MOL Board asked some university MOL members to join for a photoshoot with a professional photographer to create pictures representative of the MOL (representing its working time, teaching, research, etc.). The MOL has provided merchandising to the Board (hoodies).
 - **Ongoing:** The MOL plans to design some branded giveaways to aid its goal to increase visibility within the university and engage/thank its members – design and realization are done together with the communication department. The MOL provides the new mid-level academic staff with some more information about their position or academic rights, flyers will follow. The MOL provides flyers within the university promoting its activities. The MOL works on its website and the availability of information in English. The MOL is active on LinkedIn to promote its work.
 - **Future:** In addition to ongoing projects, the MOL will provide merchandising to the MOL representatives, new board members, and the MOL members (with goodies) in 2024. Future activities of the MOL regard its implication in the LuCampus Dinner 2024 or the Welcome Party in 2024 (sponsoring).
- **Working Conditions:** This working area concentrates on improving the working conditions of the mid-level academics of the University of Lucerne. It involves conducting surveys and informal exchanges to identify and address issues related to equality across faculties, the allocation of resources, and exploring other career-relevant opportunities, such as a postdoc sabbatical, that contribute to career development and work-life balance.
 - **Past:** The MOL developed and administered a survey to shed light on the working conditions of the mid-level academics of the University of Lucerne. The survey was administered by the end of 2022 and results were analyzed in February 2023. Results were presented to the relevant (higher) university bodies. The MOL explored options for sabbatical opportunities, contributing to improved working conditions and career development. The MOL examines together with the HR department the CHF 1500 rule and resource allocation to ensure fair and equitable conditions for all members. The MOL has further decided to develop board regulations. These regulations are available to anyone and serve as a basis for decision making at the MOL board.

- **Ongoing:** The MOL works on developing a Competence Center for young academics (position paper) with the Graduate Academy. The MOL collaborates with other university bodies (SOL/ATOL) on hygienic products and language courses among others. The MOL is further involved in meetings with the communication department and the IT department to answer the needs of the MOL members (wrt. the MOL survey). Additionally, the MOL has been in close contact with human resources to clarify the PhD discrepancies in salary levels.
- **Future:** Prospective projects include the relaunch of the MOL-survey in 2024 with focus on specific areas of action identified through the survey in 2022.

3 MOL administration office

The office of the MOL has been instrumental in providing administrative relief to the board. With the support of Christina Bolliger, who has occupied this position at a 10% workload basis, except for the period between November 2022 and April 2023 where she worked at a 20% capacity the board has been able to perform its duties more thoroughly, i.e., in communication and support of the intermediate staff. The office, in consultation and collaboration with the board, executes crucial tasks for the success of the MOL mission.

Due to the limited contract load of 10% more and more additional tasks are taken over by members of the board to ensure functionality within the 10% workload. Examples include organizing apéros, compiling the annual report, and coordinating with the UniKomm (flyers, goodies, etc.). In this context, it must be pointed out that a long-term transfer and preservation of knowledge may not be guaranteed, as the office cannot be involved in all necessary tasks for capacity reasons.

4 Reports from MOL working groups

Purpose and objectives

The MOL Board continues to advocate for the establishment of various working groups and supports their activities. These working groups serve the purpose of actively shaping the university by facilitating networking and academic participation in university policies. They make the concerns of early career researchers visible and collectively advocate for their interests, often through political initiatives. In doing so, they contribute to improving the conditions of daily academic life.

The MOL working groups do not replace positions and committees within the University of Lucerne. Instead, they were initiated to address important issues such as sustainability or diversity. Working groups (WG) aim, among other things, to use political initiatives to demand long-term and institutionalized solutions.

The following reports have been written by the representatives of the working groups themselves. The Board extends its heartfelt appreciation for the dedication of these working groups.

4.1 WG: Women in academia

The WG Women* in Academia was able to secure CHF 38,700 in funds from the Equality Commission of the University of Lucerne for the years 2023-2025. With these funds, the following events were organized in 2023- May 2024:

- Lunch for young female scientists for networking and knowledge exchange
- Panel discussion “Current and Best Practices for Supporting Young Female Academics in Switzerland”, which took place on September 25, 2023.
- Workshop “Feminine Leadership Communication Skills in Academia” on October 16 2023, with Marisa Waldburger.
- WiA Retreat for writing, networking and input sessions from January 30 until February 3 2024, with 19 attendees during these days.

- Follow-up Workshop “Feminine Leadership Communication Skills in Academia” May 23 and 24 2024, with Marisa Waldburger

Since summer 2023, the following three women have been on the board of the WG: Christina Cavedon, Leonie Mathis, and Anna Katharina Vokinger. All of them will leave the board at the end of Spring Term 2024 and currently the search for successors is on.

In summary, it can be said that the WG has firmly established itself among female early-stage researchers during the course of 2023. The events were well attended, and 109 young female scientists have subscribed to the group’s mailing list to be regularly informed about the WG’s events.

5 Reports from MOL representatives

The representatives themselves have written the following reports. The Board extends its heartfelt appreciation for the commitment of the MOL representatives.

5.1 Senate

Mid-level staff representatives: Désirée Waibel, Alexander Ort, Markus Schreiber

The midlevel faculty is represented with three seats in the Senate. During the reporting period, the representatives of the MOL have advocated for the interests of the midlevel faculty regarding various items on the Senate’s agenda, such as professorship appointments, the adoption of university regulations, and the establishment of new degree programs and commissions.

Importantly, the standard length of temporary employment contracts for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers has been increased to better reflect the time needed to complete doctoral and postdoctoral theses.

New statutes for the mid-level organization were passed by the senate in November 2023. The new statutes allow for longer term limits for the board members, integrate the treasurer into the board, introduce deputies for the MOL representatives, and change the date of the general assembly.

In addition, the senate passed a new University Statute, a diversity strategy and an open science policy.

5.2 University association

MOL representative: Markus Schreiber, Dr. iur.

The [University Association](#) is an institution that, among other things, politically supports the interests of Unilu. Since 2022, the mid-level staff has also been represented on the association's board. Members of the mid-level staff are likely to be familiar with the University Association mainly because of the [thesis awards](#) it presents at the annual Dies Academicus. As the establishment of the new [Faculty of Behavioural Sciences and Psychology](#) and the expansion of the former Department of Health Sciences and Medicine into a [faculty](#) were successfully completed last year, the future direction of the University Association became the focus during the reporting period

The plans to introduce free membership for students, which had also been prepared by the mid-level staff representative, were ultimately dropped by the Board. Among other things, this is intended to prevent competition with the alumni association. The next major project supported by the University Association is the Long Night of the Sciences in Lucerne, which was originally planned for 2024 and has now been postponed to the summer of 2025. The University Association has provided financial support for this event.

At the General Assembly on 23 April 2024, Helene Meyer-Jenni and Rector Bruno Staffelbach retired from the Board. Markus Schreiber will remain on the Board as a representative of the mid-level staff until October 2024 on an interim basis. We are still looking for interested candidates to succeed him who would like to contribute to anchoring the University of Lucerne in Central Switzerland. Serving on the Board of the Association requires only a modest time

commitment and is an excellent opportunity to network with personalities from politics, business and society.

All other mid-level faculty members can also express their solidarity with the University of Lucerne by becoming a member of the association. [Membership](#) in the University Association is extremely inexpensive with an annual fee of still only CHF 25 and entitles members to participate in the General Assembly, among other things. The General Assembly not only passes the most important resolutions of the Association, but also includes an interesting lecture each year. The most recent contribution by Prof. Dr. Gisela Michel about the effects of child cancer on relatives should soon be available as part of the [University Speeches](#).

5.3 Research commission

MOL representative: Dr. Sarah Mantwill

The Research Commission of the University of Lucerne (FoKo) promotes research activities and coordinates research policy at the University. The newly established Grants Office supports the commission.

According to FoKo regulations and guidelines, the Research Commission fulfills the following functions and tasks:

- **Development and Coordination:** Formulating and coordinating the university's research strategy and policy.
- **Management of Research Funds:** Administering the university's research credit.
- **Evaluation and Funding:** Assessing funding applications and allocating research funds for:
 - Projects
 - Seed funding
 - Conferences and publications
 - Outreach projects
 - Exchange and networking
- **Gender Research Funding:** Allocating funds for gender research in collaboration with the Gender Equality Commission.
- **Mobility Grants:** Evaluating mobility grant applications for doctoral students with the Graduate Academy.

During the reporting period, the Research Commission held two sessions, as is customary. Detailed information on decisions and funding allocations can be found in the annual report of the Research Commission.

5.4 Equality commission

MOL representative: Tatjana Graf, MSc

The Equality Commission (GLK) advises and supports the organs of the university on equality issues, develops equality measures, and decides on the allocation of financial resources to equal opportunity projects. The Commission promotes transparency in appointment procedures and initiates equality controlling. Moreover, it introduces issues of strategic importance related to equality into the committees of the University of Lucerne. The Commission members meet four to six times a year

News from the GLK 2023/2024:

- **Equality Monitoring.** No significant progress within gender equality at the University of Lucerne. An example from the Equality Monitoring: In March 2023, 27 % of the professors (full and associate) were female, out of 22 titular professorships, four were held by women and out of 16 visiting professorships, two were held by women. The number of female lecturers is stagnating at around 30%. All faculties are asked to submit „Gleichstellungspläne“ to the GLK every year to ensure their progress in

advocating equal opportunities at the University of Lucerne. Since this year (2024), both goals AND progress have to be documented and evaluated in the plan.

- **Sexual Harassment Awareness Day.** The second edition of the "Sexual Harassment Awareness Day" took place on April 25, 2024. The campaign advocates a harassment-free university environment across Swiss universities and research institutions.
- **Equality Delegates in Appeal Procedures.** Since the amendment of the appeals regulations on August 1, 2023, only individuals from a specific pool of equality delegates may be used in appeal procedures. The GLK has also decided that, in principle, only individuals who have corresponding specialist knowledge, i.e., who have attended further training, can be deployed. The list is managed by the GLK and can be obtained there. A second round of training has taken place in the spring term 2024.
- **Diversity Strategy.** With the new university statute, from 01.01.24, the GLK is responsible not only for equal opportunities but also for diversity at the University of Lucerne. In the spring term 2024, a working group (AG Diversity) has been formed with the goal to develop concrete recommendations for the implementation of the diversity strategy for 2025-2028. The GLK will discuss and develop the recommendations in the last meeting of this term (scheduled in May 2024).
- **Changes in the Kita Campus.** From 1 August 2024, the Kita Campus will be operated by profawo, a non-profit organization in the field of family childcare and care for relatives. This ensures that childcare service will continue to be available for the children of university members. <https://www.unilu.ch/news/uni-leben/profawo-betreibt-kuenftig-kita-campus-8083/>

5.5 Universitäre Lehrkommission (ULEKO)

MOL representative: Aline Leimann, MLaw

Die ULEKO hat in diesem Berichtszeitraum neue Richtlinien zur Vergabe von Fördergeldern neuer Lehrformen und Entwicklung neuer Technologien für die Lehre erlassen. Der Leitfaden ist unter https://www.unilu.ch/fileadmin/universitaet/dienste/zele/Dok/ULEKO_Leitfaden_Innovative_Lehre_Ueberarbeitung_Feb24.pdf auffindbar. Neben Regelungen über die formale und inhaltliche Ausgestaltung der Anträge sind auch die Fristen geändert worden. Neu können Anträge für das Herbstsemester jeweils bis zum 15. Februar und für das Frühjahrssemester bis zum 1. September eingereicht werden. So erfahren die Dozierenden auch früh genug, ob dem Antrag entsprochen wird, da anfangs des Semester auch gleich entschieden wird.

During this reporting period, the ULEKO issued new guidelines for the allocation of funding for new forms of teaching and the development of new technologies for teaching. The guidelines can be found at https://www.unilu.ch/fileadmin/universitaet/dienste/zele/Dok/ULEKO_Leitfaden_Innovative_Lehre_Ueberarbeitung_Feb24.pdf (only available in German). In addition to regulations on the form and content of applications, the deadlines have also been changed. Applications can now be submitted by February 15 for the fall semester and by September 1 for the spring semester. This means that lecturers will find out early enough whether the application will be approved, as decisions are made at the beginning of the semester.

5.6 Actionuni

MOL representative: Natalie Messerli

The MOL supports the Health Survey. For an overview about the activities of actionuni visit the website: <http://www.actionuni.ch>

5.7 Echo-Group Mensa

MOL representative: Lea Keller

The sessions with the "**Echogruppe Mensa**" took place in January 2024. Key points included:

- General information 2nd semester 2023: Guest numbers were pleasing and sales were significantly higher compared to the 1st semester. There was also a significant increase in catering.
- ID requirement for employees and students since October 2023: The new regulation is established hesitantly.
- Price adjustments from 2024: Instead of a price increase for the menus, the graduated prices will remain the same, but the menu salad is now charged separately (CHF 2.50). Coffee/tea, Croissants, Chocolate etc. are offered with a standard price. Eco-discount "BYO Cup" (CHF -.50 price reduction on the standard price if you bring your own cup).
- New checkout system / self-checkout: Artificial intelligence recognizes the tableau with the menu selection and the price level based on the ID card. One-time registration with credit card, if you need a receipt.
- Idea for reducing disposable tableware / coffee cups etc.: reusable coffee cups as a gift for new students / employees.
- Next session in June 2024.

5.8 Quality assurance commission

MOL representative: Antonia Steigerwald

The Quality Commission develops the quality strategy of the University of Lucerne and coordinates its implementation. This includes all processes and evaluations of core activities (research, teaching, continuing education, promotion of young talent, services, and internationalization).

In the past three years, the focus has been on developing a quality management system and meeting the requirements for institutional accreditation that the University of Lucerne had received. Since 2024, this step has been completed, and the university is now accredited without further conditions in accordance with HFKG.

The coming months will serve, among other things, to formulate measures from the research evaluation, close gaps in quality management, and set up a teaching evaluation. The MOL representation in the Quality Assurance Commission is in constant communication to accompany the strategy and processes for the promotion of young talent.

An overview of existing processes and contact persons can be found at the following link:

<https://www.unilu.ch/universitaet/dienste/entwicklung/qualitaet/prozesse/nachwuchsfoerderung/>

For questions or suggestions, we are happy to assist. Please feel free to contact us!

5.9 Ethics board

MOL representative: Dr. Brigitte Hofstetter

Since the Senate elections in March 2024, the committee has two new members: Prof. Andrew Gloster as the representative of the VPF (replacing Prof. Fred Mast) and Giulia Liggerstorfer as the representative of the SOL (replacing Severin Kessler). Since its constitution meeting in September 2023, the Ethics Board has reviewed fifteen applications. Ethical approval requires the authorization of at least three members of the Ethics Board. To ensure that applications are reviewed appropriately, all members of the Ethics Board complete a web-based learning

program and certification in research ethics evaluation (TRREE). The planned tool for electronic submission has been put on hold due to a lack of funding. Instead, a form for the submission of applications is being developed and will be published on the Ethics Board's homepage.

5.10 Sustainability Commission

The sessions with the "**Sustainability Commission**" took place in March 2024. Key points included:

- Sustainable products in the "Selecta-Automaten" (healthier, regional and without palm oil, etc.): implementation still pending (clarifications with university management)
- Sustainability strategy: Measure "Repair & further use of resources" has failed
- Awareness-raising campaign: planned for May 2024 (waste reduction)
- Flight data evaluation 2023: should be published; number of flights increased in 2023 (esp. for external service providers TF); RF has the highest "climate impact"; also short distances (less than 500km / less than 1h) à target has apparently not been reached (we are moving away from climate neutrality) à Possible "solution": call for action at faculty level; possible obligation to report by faculties
- Award for sustainable student and research work: concept developed with the Sustainability Working Group; looking for Jury members!
- Goal: Representation of all faculties in the Sustainability Commission
- Vacant position "Sustainability Specialist" (50-60%) now filled (successor to Philippe Stawiski from June 2024)