



**University of  
Zurich** UZH



## **Joint media release: University of Zurich and the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation**

Zurich and Zug, 22 February 2018

### **Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation to Finance New Center for Research into Long-Term Effects of Breastfeeding**

**As part of its efforts to increase its research in the area of child and youth development, the University of Zurich is set to create a new center for breastfeeding research at the Faculty of Business, Economics and Informatics – the first center of its kind in the world. The endowed professorship and associated research fund will be financed by the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation in the amount of 10 million Swiss francs.**

What are the reasons a mother does or does not breastfeed? What effect does the decision have on the child, the mother, and society? Although there is a lot of scientific evidence for the health benefits of breastfeeding for both children and their mothers, still not much is known about women's reasons for breastfeeding and how that decision is influenced by their sociocultural environment.

The University of Zurich (UZH) is now going to examine these questions at the new Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation Center for Economics of Child and Youth Development with a Focus on Breastfeeding", the first research center of its kind in the world. It will be part of the Faculty of Business, Economics and Informatics and consist of a professorship and a research fund. Both will be financed by the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation for a total of 10 million Swiss francs.

#### **Valuable complement to the existing research field**

"We are very glad that the Foundation is expanding its support. It enables an internationally unique research program to be initiated at UZH," says President Michael Hengartner. It is planned that the new professor for the economics of child and youth development with a focus on breastfeeding will be appointed by the Fall Semester of 2018. The professorship endowed by the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is a valuable complement to the existing research being done at the Department of Economics into child and youth development.

The Foundation already initiated a professorship for human lactation research within the Faculty of Medicine at UZH in 2015. The Foundation invested 20 million Swiss francs into this endowed professorship, which is focused on researching the influence of breastfeeding and human milk on early child development.



### **Combining medical and economic research**

“With the two professorships in economics and medicine at UZH, a unique research cluster will be created that will enable findings from the medical field about brain development in breastfed infants to be linked to findings relating to the long-term effect of breastfeeding on children and young people,” explains Göran Larsson, Chairman of the Board of the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation. “We are pleased that we have been able to develop a fruitful partnership with UZH for the further development of human milk research with unique perspectives for teaching and research.”

### **Giving children a good start in life**

Conducting research into the impact breastfeeding and human milk have on early childhood nutrition, and their later impact on health and on cognitive and social skills in adulthood, is challenging. Such research is necessarily long-term in nature and requires an interdisciplinary approach as well as complex methodological processes. “Any discussion about giving children the best start in life is highly emotionally charged. All the more reason, then, why methodologically validated and evidence-based findings are needed,” says Prof. Ernst Fehr, behavioral economist and Co-initiator of the new research program.

### **Make new findings generally available**

The Department of Economics has greatly increased its research efforts in the field of child and youth development in recent years and today boasts a large range of research projects in this area. “Our aim is to be able to make available new findings from our research activities to help mothers who are facing the decision of whether to breastfeed as well as for politicians or health-care professionals seeking reliable information and data sources. The Department of Economics is therefore an ideal partner for us,” adds Dr. Katharina Lichtner, Managing Director of the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation.



### **University of Zurich**

The University of Zurich (UZH) is one of the leading research universities in Europe and a member of the League of European Research Universities. The University's international standing is reflected in the many distinctions awarded to its members over the years, including 12 Nobel Prizes. With a current enrollment of over 26,000 students, UZH is the largest university in Switzerland, and with around 100 subject areas on offer, it boasts the most comprehensive academic program in the country. More than 5,000 academic staff (including 500 professors) research and teach at the University's 150 institutes and departments. Founded in 1833, UZH was the first university in Europe to be founded by a democratic state.  
[www.uzh.ch](http://www.uzh.ch)

### **Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation**

The Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is one of the first foundations in the world with a prime focus on promoting and supporting breast milk and breastfeeding. Based in Zug, Switzerland, it was founded in 2013 with the aim of promoting the scientific and public recognition of breastfeeding and human milk as – given the current state of science – the best nutrition for newborns and infants. It considers itself as an instigator and promoter of new knowledge. The Foundation invests globally in projects and scientific research in breastfeeding and breast milk. It places high value on multidisciplinary collaboration and supports projects with a sustainable impact on the well-being of mother and child.  
[www.larsson-rosenquist.org](http://www.larsson-rosenquist.org)

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