



## News Release

Zurich, 7 July 2015

# Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation Endows First Professorship Worldwide for Human Lactation Research

**The world's first medical professorship for human lactation research is set to be established at the University of Zurich. Initiated and funded by the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation through an endowment of 20 million Swiss francs, the aim of the professorship is to gain new insights into the composition of human milk and its functional properties.**

Human milk is significant for long-term health. Not only does it reduce the short-term morbidity rate among premature and newborn infants; by conferring passive immunity and preventing allergies, it positively influences human health well into adulthood. Surprisingly however, the topic of human milk nutrition and breastfeeding remains under-researched. With a view to closing knowledge gaps and gaining valuable new insights in this field, the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is funding the first medical professorship worldwide for human lactation research. The professorship will be established from 2016 at the University of Zurich for an indefinite period, but for a minimum of 25 years. The endowment sum of 20 million Swiss francs will be transferred to the UZH Foundation in a single payment; the funds will then be invested and used in accordance with the Foundation's mission.

### **Close collaboration with UniversityHospital and University Children's Hospital**

"We are delighted to receive the generous donation from the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation. The endowed professorship will be established at UZH's Faculty of Medicine, providing an optimal framework for interdisciplinary collaboration and research cooperation with both the Department of Neonatology at the UniversityHospital Zurich and the Department for Pediatrics at the University Children's Hospital," says Michael Hengartner, President of the University of Zurich. UZH doctors-in-training will benefit from this development, and new research outcomes will extend the body of knowledge in this globally relevant field. Hengartner believes, "The professorship will further strengthen the international reputation of UZH in medical research and boost the performance and research activities in pediatrics."

The future professorship is under the patronage of Felix Sennhauser, Medical Director of the University Children's Hospital Zurich and Dirk Bassler, Medical Director of the Department of Neonatology at the UniversityHospital Zurich. The endowed professorship will benefit strongly both from the internationally renowned longitudinal studies being undertaken at the Children's Hospital and from the Department of Neonatology at the UniversityHospital with its specialization on evidence-based methods.

### **Unique Foundation Mission**

The Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is the first foundation worldwide whose sole focus is on human milk and breastfeeding. "The Foundation chose the University of Zurich for the endowment



because of its favorable medical research conditions which enable high-caliber interdisciplinary studies in both basic and clinical research,” says Michael Larsson, President of the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation.

### **Second Chair in Perth**

As a complement to the endowed professorship at the University of Zurich, the Foundation is also funding a Chair for Human Lactology at the University of Western Australia (UWA) in Perth. It is the world’s first chair in biochemistry for human lactology and will be funded by the foundation via an endowment of 8.6 million Australian dollars.

“For the foundation, the two endowments are a significant first step in promoting scientific and public recognition of human milk nutrition. By anchoring these in medical and biochemistry faculties, we aim to ensure that a multidisciplinary approach to human milk research is applied at both universities,” Larsson adds. Accordingly, the research teams at UZH and UWA will collaborate through the sharing of research results and via student exchange programs.

#### **University of Zurich**

The University of Zurich (UZH), a member of the League of European Research Universities (LERU), is one of Europe’s most prestigious research institutions. Its international standing is reflected in the many distinctions conferred upon its members over the years, including **12 Nobel Prizes**. With a current enrollment of 26,000 students and over 100 subject areas on offer, it boasts the most comprehensive academic program in Switzerland. More than 5,000 instructors (including 600 professors) research and teach at the University’s 150 institutes and departments. Founded in 1833, UZH was the first European university to be established by a democratic country.  
[www.uzh.ch](http://www.uzh.ch)

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

The Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is the first foundation in the world with a prime focus on promoting and supporting human milk and breastfeeding. Based in Zug/Switzerland, it was founded in 2013 with the aim to promote the scientific and public recognition of human milk as the best nutrition for newborns. It considers itself as an instigator and promoter of new knowledge about human milk and breastfeeding. The foundation invests globally in projects and scientific activities in human milk research and breastfeeding promotion. It places high value on interdisciplinarity and sustainable impact for the well-being of mother and child.  
[www.larsson-rosenquist.org](http://www.larsson-rosenquist.org)

#### **University of Western Australia**

The University of Western Australia is one of Australia’s leading universities, with an international reputation for excellence in teaching, research and community engagement. Already ranked 88 in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), UWA aims to be counted in the top 50 by 2050. UWA is a member of the prestigious Group of Eight, a coalition of leading research-intensive Australian universities. Its strong research culture attracts outstanding staff and high levels of competitive research funding. For more than a century, UWA’s talented researchers have produced



**Universität  
Zürich**  
UZH

FAMILY  
**LARSSON**  **ROSENQUIST**  
FOUNDATION  
dedicated to human milk



quality outcomes that have contributed substantially to the social, cultural and economic development of Western Australia and Australia, and the University continues to play a vital role in scholarship and discoveries of global significance.  
<http://www.uwa.edu.au/>

**Contact:**

Prof. Michael O. Hengartner  
President of the University of Zurich  
University of Zurich  
Tel. +41 44 634 44 64  
E-mail: [michael.hengartner@uzh.ch](mailto:michael.hengartner@uzh.ch)

Michael Larsson  
President of the Foundation Board  
Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation  
Tel. +41 41 510 05 12  
E-mail: [michael.larsson@larsson-rosenquist.org](mailto:michael.larsson@larsson-rosenquist.org)

Nathalie Huber  
Media Relations  
University of Zurich  
Tel. +41 44 634 44 64  
E-mail: [nathalie.huber@kommunikation.uzh.ch](mailto:nathalie.huber@kommunikation.uzh.ch)