



**Universität
Zürich** ^{UZH}

Digital Society Initiative (DSI)

Digital Society Initiative – August 2026



Dear readers,

At the center of this issue is DigitalTransfer, our new knowledge platform bundling video content from teaching and research and making basic digital knowledge accessible to everyone.

We also explore, in the latest DSI Insights, how generative AI is changing our view of history, look ahead to the upcoming «Decade of Impact» communication series marking ten years of DSI, and welcome new faces – while saying goodbye, and thank you, to others.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Your Digital Society Initiative Team

News



DigitalTransfer

Digital technologies are shaping the way people work, communicate, and make decisions. For many, the mechanisms behind these technologies remain invisible.

DigitalTransfer, the DSI's new platform, makes this knowledge accessible. It bundles **video content** from teaching and research, making **basic digital knowledge** available for everyone – no prior knowledge or specialized studies required.

The content (mainly in German) is organized into six topic areas: «Basiswissen», «Daten», «KI & Algorithmen», «Interaktive Systeme», «Medien & Gesellschaft» and «Recht». Each video can be explored on its own, as an introduction or for deeper insight.

[Explore DigitalTransfer](#)

DSI INSIGHTS

The Gaps in the Archive – How Generative AI Is Changing Our View of History

In the [latest column](#) (in German) in the «DSI Insights» series, DIZH Bridge Professor Roland Meyer shows what **generative AI** already means today for **how we view the past** – and why the technology should not be understood merely as a promise for the future.

In the «DSI Insights» column series, the DSI showcases its expertise and interdisciplinarity on topics of **digital transformation**. The columns by authors from the DSI network also appear in the online magazine [«Inside IT»](#).

[All DSI Insights](#)



DSI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hello Jan, thanks Titus

The **Board of Directors** of the DSI is undergoing a **change**: DSI Professor Jan Dirk Wegner takes over the seat from Prof. Dr. Titus Neupert this summer, who is leaving the board after five years.

Jan Dirk Wegner is already well known at the DSI in his capacity as a DSI Professor. He heads the «Data Science for Sciences» chair at the DM3L at the University of Zurich as well as the EcoVision Lab.

He succeeds Prof. Dr. **Titus Neupert**, who is leaving the DSI Board of Directors after five years. Neupert is a Professor at the Department of Physics at the University of Zurich and played a key role in the development and implementation of the [DSI Minor/LAO Digital Skills](#) master's program. In this program, UZH students learn how to address the challenges of digital transformation and capitalize on its opportunities.

The DSI extends its heartfelt thanks to Titus for his dedication and welcomes Jan in his new role.

[Meet the DSI Board of Directors](#)



Decade of Impact

On **September 14, 2016**, more than 300 guests gathered for the official opening of the DSI. Then-Federal President Johann Schneider-Ammann praised the young initiative's broad, interdisciplinary approach at the time – a vision from which ten years of research, teaching, and public dialogue on digital transformation have since grown: a **«Decade of Impact»**.

On **September 14, 2026** – exactly ten years after the opening celebration – a **communication series** of the same name kicks off, telling the story of what the DSI has achieved over the past decade through ten success stories.

Stay tuned: more to come soon.



DSI EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Summer Party & a New Chapter

Record-breaking temperatures marked this year's **DSI Summer Party**: shade was in high demand, and non-alcoholic beer was all the rage. Despite this, the celebration was in full swing – as the **2024 - 2026 cohort of the DSI Excellence Program** received their certificates of completion.

A new chapter begins next week: the **7th cohort** welcomes 13 doctoral students from a wide range of disciplines, ready to dive into interdisciplinary work on digitalization topics.

The [Excellence Program](#) offers doctoral students from all disciplines a supplementary curriculum that prepares them for an environment where interdisciplinary collaboration on

digitalization topics is a top priority.

We warmly congratulate all graduates and wish them every success for the future – and extend a warm welcome to the 7th cohort.

Antritts vorlesungen

WITH DSI INVOLVEMENT

Inaugural Lectures

Newly appointed professors and private lecturers provide an overview of their respective research areas in their **inaugural lectures**, and at the same time offer an insight into the colorful diversity of teaching and research at the University of Zurich.

We are especially pleased to highlight the lectures by two DSI Professors and one DSI member:

- [Beyond Averages: Distributional Perspectives on Economic Outcomes](#) by Prof. Dr. Martina Pons
30.11.2026, 17:00 / KOL, Universität Zürich Zentrum, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zurich / Room: G 201 Aula
- [The Social Penalties of Human Augmentation](#) by Prof. Dr. Gemma Newlands
07.12.2026, 17:00 / KOL, Universität Zürich Zentrum, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zurich / Room: G 201 Aula
- [Towards Quantitative Bioimage Analysis across Modalities and Scales](#) by Prof. Dr. Virginie Uhlmann
07.12.2026, 19:00 / KOL, Universität Zürich Zentrum, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zurich / Room: G 201 Aula

The inaugural lectures take place in the auditorium of the University of Zurich (Zentrum), are **open to the public**, and are **free of charge**.



SAVE THE DATE(S)

General Meeting & Anniversary Celebration

Please save the following two dates in your calendar, if you haven't already:

- The **DSI General Meeting** 2026 takes place on **October 28** as a lunch event.
- As previously announced, the **anniversary celebration** marking ten years of the DSI takes place on the evening of **November 24**.
 - Under the motto **«Decade of Impact»**, the event will center on success stories from ten years of the DSI.
 - The **keynote speaker** is Prof. Dr. Urs Gasser. He is Professor of Public Policy, Governance and Innovative Technology and Rector of the Munich School of Politics and Public Policy, as well as Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Technology at the Technical University of Munich.
 - We are also pleased to welcome **remarks** from Dr. Martina Hirayma (Director of the SBFI), Cantonal Minister of Education Silvia Steiner, UZH Rector Michael Schaepman, and UZH Vice President Elisabeth Stark.
 - The event will be moderated by **Kathrin Hönegger**, known from the SRF science program «Einstein».

Save both time slots in your calendar now. **DSI members** will receive a personal invitation to both events.

LECTURE SERIES

How Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence Are Changing Our Society

The algorithmic enchantment of the world, techno-religion, robotization, AI in the

workplace: the lecture series «How Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence Are Changing Our Society» asks how closely media change and social change are intertwined. From September 22, international speakers and DSI members share their research **every Tuesday from 14:15 to 15:45**.

The public series is organized by the Media Change & Innovation Division (IKMZ) together with the Center for Information Technology, Society, and Law (ITSL) and the DSI.

Programme and details



MORE NEWS IN BRIEF

DSI Shorts

In this section, we highlight more news from the DSI universe.

- The [DSI congratulates Nina Hartrampf](#) on her promotion to Associate Professor at UZH and **Kai Niebert** on his appointment to the German «Rat für Nachhaltige Entwicklung».
- We also congratulate two DSI members: **Martin Pačesa** on the [Eppendorf Award for Young European Investigators](#) and Daniela Jaramillo-Dent on an [SNSF Ambizione grant](#).
- In early June, researchers and people living with type 1 diabetes discussed how **trust in digital health technologies** emerges at the symposium «[Would You Trust an Artificial Pancreas?](#)».
- The **Association for Computational Linguistics** honours DSI member [Prof. Dr. Rico Sennrich](#) for a paper that has had a lasting impact on natural language processing.
- DSI Professor [Anastasiia Koloskova](#) has been named the 2026 EPFL Laureate of the prestigious **Lopez-Loreta Prize**.
- The **DSI Infrastructures & Labs** create shared environments for digital research at UZH. Since fall 2025, [four more of these projects have been completed](#) – from a text analysis platform to a national survey panel.
- The [LUDIC CULTURE HUB](#), a project funded in the third DIZH Structure Call that establishes **games as an interdisciplinary field of research and practice**, launches with the involvement of several DSI members.

Events

**Until
30.08.**

Scientifica – Zürcher Wissenschaftsfestival

Under the motto «How We Create Knowledge», researchers present their projects through exhibitions, short lectures, and workshops.

[More information](#)

**10.09. -
02.10.**

Innovathon 2026: The Digitalization of Mobility

This transdisciplinary course equips students with practical innovation skills through structured, hands-on problem-solving techniques.

An event series by the DSI Community Mobility.

[More information](#)

**21. -
23.10.**

1st Annual Digital Publics Conference

The 1st Annual Digital Publics Conference, organized by the DSI Community Digital Publics, will bring together scholars from around the world to discuss the transformation of public life through digital technologies.

[More information](#)

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