

Minutes of the of the Board meeting of 2 June 2025

Venue: Kollegienhaus, meeting room 206
Time: 12:15 - 13:45

Present: Kathrin Knapp, Anna Viola Bleichenbacher, Felix André Erb, Micha Bigler, Sepideh Alassi, Boris Ševarika, Sergej Maul, Raul Hochuli, Fabio Carbone, Antonia Vogler, Tomás Sousa, Amancaya Formica, Patricia Eiche

Absent: Anita Dirnberger, Meret Cajacob, Sophie Reckels

Total: 13 present, of which those entitled to vote: 11

Minutes: Patricia Eiche

Agenda items:

1. Approval of the agenda for the Board meeting of 2 June 2025
2. Election of the person taking the minutes and election of the person counting the votes
3. Approval of the minutes of the last Board meeting of 17 February 2025
4. Personnel
5. Finances
 - a) Annual report 2024
 - b) Current situation
 - c) Documents for the tax administration
 - d) Financial controls
6. Current status of ongoing avuba activities
 - a) Mission, vision, values
 - b) Communication concept
 - c) Reform of employment and working conditions for doctoral students and postdocs
 - d) Power abuse / sexual harassment
 - e) Anti-austerity measures
 - f) Mental health initiatives
7. Varia
8. Next avuba board meeting

Agenda item 1: Approval of the agenda for the Board meeting of 2 June 2025

The agenda for the Board meeting is approved unanimously.

Agenda item 2: Election of the person taking the minutes and election of the person counting the votes

Patricia Eiche is unanimously elected as secretary. Amancaya Formica is unanimously elected as vote counter.

Agenda item 3: Approval of the minutes of 17 February 2025

The minutes of the Board meeting of 17 February 2025 were approved unanimously.

Agenda item 4: Personnel

The avuba Co-Presidium and the Co-general managers distribute tasks according to their respective workloads. In recent weeks, the most important projects have primarily concerned Patricia Eiche's area of responsibility. She will therefore reduce her accumulated overtime in the summer. There is currently no need to bring in a fifth person on a freelance basis to support the team with regards to the ongoing work.

The continuous monitoring of open tasks and the recording of minutes at the weekly Jour Fix team meetings have proven their worth. This means that all team members are always up-to-date about current affairs. It also ensures that if one person is absent at short notice, the rest of the team is informed about the status of ongoing projects and tasks at all times.

Agenda item 5: Finances, a) Annual report 2024, b) Current situation, c) Documents for the tax administration, d) Financial controls

a) Annual report 2024

The report was prepared and forwarded to the General Secretariat of the University of Basel in April for inclusion on the agenda, so that it can be discussed at one of the upcoming meetings of the Rectorate. This procedure is in accordance with the requirements of the performance agreement between avuba and the Rectorate. In the meantime, the 2024 annual report has already been included on the agenda and was acknowledged with approval. The Rectorate thanks avuba for its work and commitment. In addition, the internal audit of the annual financial statement took place in May. This audit was carried out by the auditors elected at the last avuba General Meeting. The paper copies of the filed invoices were also checked. The reported balances correspond to the available receipts. The auditors therefore propose that the General Meeting, which will take place on 24 November 2025, approve the annual financial statements for the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 in their current form and grant discharge to the Co-general managers, the Co-Presidium as well the Executive Board.

b) Current situation

The current status according to SAP is as follows:

- The projection for personnel expenses up to the end of the year is currently CHF 10,000 below the planned figure of CHF 170,000 because the item for honoraria is not expected to be utilised.
- At CHF 35,000, the projection for operating expenses is also below the planned amount of CHF 40,500.
- Until the Board discusses measures to support assistants affected by abuse of power, the "Power Abuse" item totalling 10,000 will also remain unused.
- The income, which consists of membership fees and the contribution from the university, is expected to total CHF 193,000, i.e. as planned.

c) Documents for the tax administration

In the canton of Basel-Stadt, tax-exempt associations (based on charitable, public or religious purpose) must submit a questionnaire and annual accounts to the tax authorities every two years. This obligation replaces the conventional tax return and serves to regularly check the

conditions for tax exemption, create transparency and prevent abuse. Changes to the articles of association or regulations must also be reported immediately. Patricia Eiche has compiled the documents for the 2023 and 2024 tax years and sent them to the tax authorities.

d) Financial controls

In accordance with avuba's financial regulations, a member of the Executive Board who is not on the Co-Presidium monitors compliance with the budget and the permissibility of the use of funds once a quarter. This person notifies the Board immediately in the event of any irregularities:

- Budget overruns;
- impending liquidity bottlenecks;
- imminent over-indebtedness;
- other unplanned events with financial implications for avuba.

Micha Bigler has made himself available to carry out the avuba quarterly inspections until further notice. He replaces Raul Hochuli, who had previously taken over the position.

Agenda item 6: Current status of ongoing avuba activities: a) Mission, vision, values, b) Communication concept, c) Reform of employment and working conditions, d) Abuse of power / sexual harassment, e) Anti-austerity measures, f) Mental health initiatives

a) Mission, vision, values

Following input from Tomás Sousa, the Co-Presidium and the Co-general managers worked together to develop avuba's vision, mission and values. The aim was to clearly set out in a few words what avuba stands for and which principles characterise its actions. These guidelines supplement the existing guidelines and serve as internal orientation and support for decision-making, while also making it possible to communicate the purpose and objectives of the organisation to the outside world in a comprehensible manner. The following text was approved by the avuba Board and will also be published on the avuba website:

- *Mission*: Empowering and representing doctoral and postdoctoral researchers at the University of Basel by advocating for their rights and fostering a supportive academic environment.
- *Vision*: A university where doctoral and postdoctoral researchers thrive in a fair, inclusive, and well-supported academic system that promotes professional growth and healthy work-life balance.
- *Values*:
 - Commitment: Devoted to serving our goals and our members.
 - Support: Providing thoughtful and dependable assistance.
 - Respect: Valuing each person's unique worth and contributions.
 - Integrity: Maintaining honest and respectful relationships.
 - Inclusivity: Creating an environment where everyone feels safe.
- The avuba guidelines in accordance with the [resolution of the avuba Board of 6 September 2023](#) continue to apply.
 - As part of its representation of interests, avuba would like to advocate at the University of Basel that
 - the contractual workloads and the protected research time are adhered to;
 - the dependence on the superior is reduced by unbundling the personal union "recruitment, supervision, evaluation";
 - assistants are equally prepared for an academic and non-academic career;
 - permanent academic positions below professorship level should be established;
 - an academic career is compatible with family commitments;

- high-quality research is promoted and assistants receive sufficient support when applying for funding;
- good, fair and healthy working conditions prevail;
- personal integrity is protected;
- the co-determination of assistants is guaranteed;
- and assistants from abroad can be integrated.

b) Communication concept

Antonia Vogler briefly presents the revised version of the avuba communication concept. The five-page document sets out the current communication processes and is intended for internal use. This ensures that both current and future employees - particularly in the Co-Presidium and Co-General managers - are always informed about how, when and to whom communication takes place. The avuba Board acknowledges and approves this concept and expresses its thanks for its preparation. The Co-Presidium has already converted the avuba newsletter into Notion, which now presents the latest information to avuba members in a more appealing way. In the next step, the same principle will be applied to both the monthly welcome e-mail to new assistants and the monthly e-mail to all avuba members informing them about the events of the month in question.

c) Reform of employment and working conditions for doctoral students and postdocs

Patricia Zweifel, coordinator of the project, joins the meeting for this agenda item. She thanks the Board for their input on possible measures to improve the employment and working conditions since the start of the project in October 2024. These have already been incorporated into the current status of the document "Auslegeordnung kostenneutrale Maßnahmen im Kontext der Reform der Anstellungs- und Arbeitsbedingungen von Doktorierenden und Postdoktorierenden an der Universität Basel" and were presented to the President's Office at the end of May. The Rectorate is in principle in agreement with the proposed approach and would like to consult the President's Conference and then the PhD Committee as well as the Research Committee on the matter next. As these committees only meet during the semester, there will be a delay of around 2 to 3 months compared to the original schedule. Nevertheless, the date of the avuba info event on [17 June 2025](#), to which all assistants are invited and which has been planned for some time, will take place anyways.

d) Power abuse / sexual harassment

At the request of avuba and skuba, the [regulations on the protection of personal integrity at the University of Basel](#) have been revised. The changes are marked with a footnote. This is standard practice for partial revisions, as the entire set of regulations is only reissued in the case of complete revisions.

In order to support assistants who suffer from abuse of power, the avuba General Meeting decided on 2 December 2024 that the avuba Board may approve a budget item of up to CHF 10,000 in addition to the already approved budget if necessary. Tomás Sousa has drawn up an overview of various ideas for this, which will be made available on SwitchDrive for joint processing after the Board meeting. In a next step, the avuba Board will discuss these proposals and, if necessary, decide on projects or services in favour of assistants.

e) Anti-austerity measures

Context: On 29 January 2025, the Federal Council opened the consultation process for the "27 relief package". In this package, it also proposes cost-cutting measures in the area of education, research and innovation (ERI) totalling over CHF 460 million per year (2027 and 2028). Vocational education and training, all universities and research and innovation promotion institutions are affected.

The Federal Council is planning to cut the SNSF's budget by around 10 per cent in 2027 and 2028 - and is expected to do so as early as 2026. Unlike other cost-cutting measures, no legislative changes are required to reduce the SNSF's budget.

Since the last Board meeting in mid-February, avuba has been active in this matter as follows:

- Participation in and publication of the actionuni media release "[Swiss mid-level staff organisations call for maintaining funding for Switzerland's high-quality research and teaching](#)" on 26 February 2025;
- Creation of a [flyer to raise awareness and mobilise people](#);
- Organisation and implementation of the joint event "[Against austerity policies at universities](#)" avuba, skuba, VSS and VPOD on 28 April 2025;
- Letter of a [consultation response on the Federal Act on the 2027 Relief Package](#) (in German only) for the attention of the Head of the Federal Department of Finance, Karin Keller-Sutter, on 30 April 2025.

avuba intends to participate in some form in the mobilisation day organised by the VSS and actionuni on 1 October 2025. The exact nature of the participation will be discussed and determined by the avuba Board at a later date.

f) Mental health initiatives

- COMPASS Mind: Both avuba and skuba would like to continue working with COMPASS Mind in the future. A service agreement has been drawn up to formalise the framework conditions for this cooperation. The avuba Board approves this text, which sets out the framework conditions and the following services to be provided by both organisations:
 - COMPASS-Mind organises at least four events a year for assistants in consultation with avuba and produces a short report with the most important key data for avuba after each event. In addition, the COMPASS-Mind website is updated at least once a semester.
 - In return, avuba promotes the joint events to its members, contributes to the catering costs as agreed (maximum CHF 300 per event, or CHF 10 per participant) and covers at least half of the hosting costs of the COMPASS-Mind website, up to a maximum of CHF 200 per year.
- Swiss-wide Mental Health Survey : As part of the Swiss-wide Mental Health Survey (SWiMS) project, the project team has now received the first drafts of both the national report and the institutional reports. These are currently being further optimised in terms of their presentation. A meeting with members of the actionuni board is planned for the beginning of June, at which the initial results will be presented and the next steps will be discussed. As the actionuni Board initiated and commissioned the project, both the data sovereignty and the decision on the publication of the reports are the responsibility of this body. The project team currently assumes that the national report can be published by September at the latest, while the regional reports and the report from the University of Basel are expected to be distributed to its members via actionuni by October. The local reports will then be published by the relevant organisations - in the case of the report for the University of Basel, for example, by avuba, which will publish the results for the approximately 550 people who took part at this university.

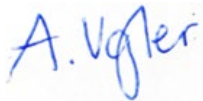
Agenda item 7: Varia

The annual avuba General Meeting will take place on 24 November 2025. Antonia Vogler asks all Board members to keep this evening free.

Agenda item 8: Next avuba Board meeting

The next Board meeting will take place on 18 September 2025.

Basel, 6 June 2025



Antonia Vogler
avuba Co-President



Tomás Sousa
avuba Co-President