Managing Collections by the University Library
ETH Zurich’s Strategy 2015 – 2020

36th Annual IATUL Conference: Strategic Partnerships for Access and Discovery
(Hanover, 5 – 9 July 2015)
Overview

1. Introduction
2. Status Determination 2013
3. The 2014 Public Report and the Strategic Decisions by the Executive Board
ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology)

- Founded in 1855
- 16 departments in the fields of:
  - Architecture and civil engineering
  - Engineering sciences
  - Natural sciences and mathematics
  - System-oriented natural sciences
  - Management and social sciences
- 18,500 students
- 500 professors
- 21 Nobel laureates
ETH Zurich’s Collections and Archives
Organisation

- Annual plenary assembly
- Collections and Archives Commission
- Commissioner of Cultural Property at ETH Zurich
- ETH-Bibliothek has to “coordinate the maintenance and further development of the culturally and historically important collections and archives at ETH Zurich”
Shared Activities

- Website (www.sammlungen-archive.ethz.ch)
- Flyer
- Evening tours for the public
Status Determination 2013

- Audit conducted by the ETH Board in 2011: recommendation of drafting a coherent overall strategy for the collections and archives
- Status determination 2013 by external expert (Dr Thilo Habel)
  - 172 pages
  - 93 recommendations
  - Questionnaire of the Coordination Centre for Scientific University Collections in Germany
The Situation as of May 2014

- Expert report not published
- 1st lesson learnt: active communication of goals, procedure and possible outcomes is important
- 2nd lesson learnt: priority-setting for heterogeneous target groups and different stakeholders is a challenge
- 3rd lesson learnt: a status determination is not a strategy
Public Report, Autumn 2014

- Reworking of the expert report into a publishable version: *Sammlungen und Archive der ETH Zürich. Wissenschaftliches Erbe für die Forschung der Zukunft* (2nd rev. ed. 2015; English translation in preparation)
The Decisions of the Executive Board

- One-page “Strategy 2015 – 2020”
- Project funding
- Re-organisation
The Functions of Scientific Collections

- Research
- Teaching
- Transfer of scientific knowledge to the public
- Preservation of cultural heritage

(Wissenschaftsrat, *Recommendations on Scientific Collections as Research Infrastructures*, 2011)
Priorities of the “Strategy 2015 – 2020”

Research Infrastructures

- “ETH Zurich’s collections and archives thus have a role to play as reference collections for current research and teaching (research in collections) and in the history of science (research about collections).”
Priorities of the “Strategy 2015 – 2020”

- High-end digitisation
- State-of-the-art metadata
- Innovative platforms
The “Strategy 2015 – 2020” in Context

- Convergence of libraries, archives and museum collections in the digital age
- Leading role of ETH-Bibliothek in making accessible and mediating the collections owned by ETH Zurich
Contact

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