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Zurich AI Festival 2025: The international AI community gathers in Zurich

From September 29 to October 4, 2025, Zurich is transforming into Europe's key hotspot for Artificial Intelligence. The Zurich AI Festival brings together international market leaders, research talents, startups, and artists across more than 25 high-caliber events. For one week, Zurich becomes the showcase of global AI innovations and debates.

The festival centers on cross-industry themes ranging from medicine and robotics to art, environment, finance, and education. Highlights include the AI+X Summit as the flagship event featuring leading international experts, the AI Policy Summit on future regulations and ethics, the Zurich Robotics & AI Founders Summit, as well as diverse artistic formats and participatory offerings. Renowned speakers from research, industry, and startups are featured – including Yariv Adan (ellipsis), Davide Scaramuzza (University of Zurich), and Annie Hartley (EPFL).

Visitors can expect an interdisciplinary mix of experimental demos, hands-on workshops, live panels, and performance art. Public-facing formats such as “AI, explain the world to me!” and “Hello, AI! Understand. Experience. Shape.” provide accessible entry points into key topics of digitalization and artificial intelligence.

High-level networking and a unique platform

Across more than ten venues – including ETH Zurich, University Hospital, Technopark, Prime Tower, Kunsthaus, and StageOne – decision-makers and innovators from science, industry, politics, and culture come together. Over 5,500 participants from Switzerland, Europe, and overseas are expected, including representatives from Google, Microsoft, Meta, Apple, IBM, leading scientific institutions, and numerous startups.

A standout signal: 23 out of 26 events are already sold out – proof of the enormous interest. The on-site and online community is generating palpable buzz, new connections, and inspired faces. Under the hashtag #ZurichAIFestival, attendees share impressions of high-profile discussions, deep knowledge exchange, and groundbreaking trends. Exclusive networking formats such as the Speakers' Dinner and Women's AI Breakfast promote targeted exchanges among investors, founders, and international thought leaders.



Robotics and startups in the spotlight

One special highlight: the close integration of #AI and #robotics was impressively showcased. Leandro von Werra (Hugging Face) demonstrated how the democratization of AI models is transforming robotics applications – and where today's systems still meet their limits.

At the startup panel in TECHNOPARK® Zurich, young companies such as Laelaps AI, miros, and Flexion Robotics presented their innovations, moderated by Dr. Christian Hugo Hoffmann. This panel (photo attached) also marked the first major co-organization with the AI Startup Center, in collaboration with SICTIC and Amazon Web Services (AWS) – a milestone for networking within the ecosystem.

Responsible AI – from principle to practice

Another focus: Responsible AI. It became clear that #ResponsibleAI is not a checklist, but an ongoing process of iteration, transparency, and collaboration. In workshops hosted by the Swiss Centre for Responsible AI, key challenges were highlighted:

- #Complexity: AI operates in uncertain environments – governance must be adaptive and holistic.
- #Trust: Auditability, data protection, and accountability are essential, but must not hinder applicability.
- #DataBias: Bias cannot be eliminated completely, but it can be exposed and managed.
- Shared literacy: Developers, managers, and users need a common language.
- Social impact: Beyond compliance, it's about jobs, skills, and trust in institutions.

Self-critical voices

Zurich is a global deep-tech hub with world-class startups in robotics, drones, and hardware. Yet some founders still struggle to find local investors who understand the language of hardware – the “language of atoms, not just bits.” This reflection underlines how important formats like the Zurich AI Festival are to build new bridges between capital, technology, and entrepreneurship.

Visibility, diversity, and impact

A content highlight was the [Top 100+ Women in AI & Data Report](#), presented at the festival's opening. It spotlights pioneers from industry, startups, and academia – deliberately limited to just over one hundred names. Melanie Gabriel (COO ETH AI Center) emphasizes:

“The biggest challenge was not finding enough candidates, but making the selection.

Visibility creates role models that inspire – especially for young talent. But it's not just about women, it's about diversity as a whole.”

Greater Zurich Area in the international spotlight

With this festival, Zurich makes a strong statement as Europe's AI capital. Sabine Müller, Deputy CEO of Greater Zurich Area AG, says:



“With the first Zurich AI Festival, the Zurich economic region gains an international format that can compete with events such as TechWeek in London, Robotics Week in Boston, VivaTech in Paris, and SusHi Tech Tokyo.” Zurich is thus making it clear: innovation, cutting-edge research, and economic strength converge here at the highest level – and the region intends to shine on the international stage.

Media service

The Zurich AI Festival opens doors to background conversations, live reporting, trend interviews, videos, and social media productions. Media representatives can meet experts directly and experience the most important trends and developments around AI up close. Press materials, background information, and interview requests are available at:

👉 www.zurichfestival.ch/media

Über Greater Zurich Area AG

Die Greater Zurich Area AG (GZA) ist die offizielle Standortmarketingorganisation der Wirtschaftsregion Zürich. In enger Zusammenarbeit mit den Kantonen Zürich, Zug, Schwyz, Graubünden, Glarus, Schaffhausen, Solothurn, Uri, Tessin sowie der Region Winterthur und der Stadt Zürich verfolgt die GZA das Ziel, innovative internationale Unternehmen in der Region anzusiedeln – gezielt in Zukunftsbranchen wie AI, Life Sciences, ICT, Robotics und Fintech. Ihr Fokus liegt nicht auf quantitativer Expansion, sondern auf qualitativer Wertschöpfung: Durch die nachhaltige Ansiedlung zukunftsweisender Firmen trägt die GZA aktiv zum wirtschaftlichen Strukturwandel und zur Stärkung der regionalen Ökosysteme bei. Als international vernetzte Organisation agiert die GZA proaktiv in strategischen Zielmärkten und positioniert den Wirtschaftsraum Zürich weltweit als innovationsstarke und lebenswerte Region – mit einem klaren Fokus auf Nachhaltigkeit, technologischer Exzellenz und globaler Wettbewerbsfähigkeit.

Über ETH AI Center

Das ETH AI Center ist das interdisziplinäre Kompetenzzentrum für künstliche Intelligenz an der Eidgenössischen Technischen Hochschule Zürich (ETH Zürich). Es bringt Forscherinnen und Forscher aus allen Departementen zusammen, die sich mit den Grundlagen, Anwendungen und Auswirkungen von KI beschäftigen. Das ETH AI Center verknüpft mehr als 110 Fakultätsmitglieder aus allen Disziplinen und deren Forschungsgruppen zu einer Gemeinschaft, welche die Entwicklung vertrauenswürdiger, breit zugänglicher und inkludierender KI-Systeme zum Nutzen der Gesellschaft vorantreibt.



Ansprechpartner

Kontakt

Christian Lüscher
Senior PR & Communications Manager
Greater Zurich Area AG (GZA)
Mobile 079 921 78 13
christian.luescher@greaterzuricharea.com

Kontakt

Helga Rietz
Science Communications Manager
ETH AI Center
Mobile 076 681 64 57
helga.rietz@ai.ethz.ch