

Press release, 9 November 2025

Willy Michel receives the Prix Suisse 2025 and Amal Clooney inspires in the Fireside Chat

- **The Prix Suisse is an annual award presented by the non-profit organisation Initiative Switzerland to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Switzerland. This year's award goes to Dr. h.c. Willy Michel, visionary, entrepreneur, and innovator. Federal Councillor Albert Rösti presented him with the award at the gala ceremony held at the Kursaal Bern.**
- **Human rights lawyer Amal Clooney spoke during the Fireside Chat about her career, her advocacy for women's rights, justice, and press freedom. Her reflections on responsibility and courage provided a powerful impulse for addressing the challenges of our time.**
- **Robotics expert Prof. Dr. Roland Siegwart of ETH Zurich offered fascinating insights into the future of humanoid robots and their role in everyday life.**

Bern, 9 November 2025 – The fifth edition of the Prix Suisse brought together around 400 guests from business, science, politics, sport and culture at the Kursaal Bern on Saturday, 8 November. The 2025 Prix Suisse was awarded to Dr. h.c. Willy Michel in recognition of his exceptional achievements as an entrepreneur, visionary and patron.

"Willy Michel stands for entrepreneurial vision, innovative strength and social responsibility. With Disetronic and Ypsomed, he has shaped medical technology and strengthened Switzerland as a hub for precision and innovation. His pioneering work, especially in insulin delivery, has set new standards and improved the lives of millions of people worldwide. We are honoured to present him with this year's Prix Suisse," says Stefan Linder, Director of Initiative Switzerland. Federal Councillor Albert Rösti presented the Prix Suisse 2025. Since 2021, the non-profit organisation Initiative Switzerland has awarded the prize annually to individuals who, with courage, creativity and foresight, have made outstanding contributions to Switzerland. Previous laureates include Peter Spuhler, honoured in 2021 for his entrepreneurial achievements; Martine Clozel, recognised in 2022 for her contributions to science; Marco Odermatt, recipient of the 2023 award in the field of sport; and Büne Huber, who was celebrated in 2024 for his cultural work. For Willy Michel, the award is a special recognition of his life's work and entrepreneurial commitment.

Fireside Chat with Human Rights Lawyer Amal Clooney

A highlight of the evening was the Fireside Chat with Amal Clooney, one of the world's leading lawyers in human rights and international law. In a compelling conversation, she spoke about responsibility, justice and the protection of press freedom.

Amal Clooney has long advocated for victims of war crimes, genocide and abuses of power. She represents figures such as Julian Assange, Maria Ressa and Nadia Murad, and works closely with the United Nations and the International Criminal Court in The Hague. As UN Special Advisor on Justice and Accountability, she campaigns worldwide for the prosecution of war crimes and for strengthening international law. Through the Clooney Foundation for Justice, she supports people who face discrimination or persecution because of their beliefs or background. The foundation provides free legal support in over 40 countries and promotes freedom of expression, equality and the rights of women.

Looking Ahead with Robotics Expert Prof. Dr. Roland Siegwart

Under the theme "What's Next?", Prof. Dr. Roland Siegwart of the ETH Zurich offered compelling insights into the future of humanoid robots. He demonstrated how artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality and biotechnology are increasingly converging and will fundamentally reshape everyday life in the coming years – not as a threat, but as an opportunity for society and the economy.

Initiative Switzerland Projects

During the evening, four projects supported by Initiative Switzerland and representing the country's innovative strength were presented. In selecting its engagements, Initiative Switzerland focuses on forward-thinking ideas, new technologies, creative approaches and practical application.

With the True Story Award and the accompanying True Story Festival, Bern once again became an international meeting place for high-quality journalism in 2025. Over 1,000 submitted reports from more than 100 countries underscore the global relevance of the format.

The award shows the importance of media freedom, diversity and journalistic excellence. With the support of Initiative Switzerland, the award has grown into an internationally recognised platform for independent journalism, linking local perspectives to global issues.

The international platform One Young World Switzerland connects emerging leaders across regions and sectors, fostering dialogue on responsible leadership in a globalised world. More than 150 young professionals discussed concrete solutions to societal and environmental challenges at the 2025 national summit. As Gold Partner, Initiative Switzerland strengthens the leadership skills and motivation of the next generation to drive sustainable change and take responsibility.

In collaboration with the University of Zurich, Initiative Switzerland launched the Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium in October 2024 – the first comprehensive and internationally networked forum of its kind in Switzerland. The inaugural edition in autumn 2025 focused on systematically integrating gender-specific differences in diagnostics, prevention and treatment. As patron partner, Initiative Switzerland works together with stakeholders from science and industry to promote fairer, more effective and safer medical care for all. In 2026, the symposium will be further expanded in scope and international reach, with the aim of strengthening Switzerland's position as a leading centre of precision medicine.

The interdisciplinary EntrepreneurSkills competition targets young talents from various professional fields and was held for the second time in 2025 as part of SwissSkills. It focuses on core entrepreneurial skills such as creative problem-solving, market understanding, opportunity assessment and persuasive pitching. Nine teams from across Switzerland developed innovative business concepts within four days on the theme "Facilitating learning in the age of artificial intelligence while mitigating AI risks." The results demonstrate how hands-on learning fosters innovation and strengthens entrepreneurial thinking.

Prix Suisse

Every year, the Swiss Initiative honours a notable figure with the "Prix Suisse". The recipients are individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Switzerland in the recent years, exemplifying courage, innovation and creativity. The Prix Suisse is awarded alternately in the fields of business, science, sports, and culture.

In 2021, entrepreneur and politician **Peter Spuhler** was the first to receive the award in the business category. The following year, in 2022, the award was presented to **Martine Clozel**, a distinguished doctor and scientist. Most recently, in November 2023, exceptional athlete **Marco Odermatt** was honored for his achievements in sports. In 2024, **Büne Huber**, musician, painter and frontman of the cult band Patent Ochsner received the Prix Suisse in recognition of the country's cultural scene.

About Initiative Switzerland

As a private promotion agency, Initiative Switzerland supports innovative ideas and projects in all parts of the country and language regions of Switzerland with a specific focus on competitiveness and prosperity in Switzerland. Through its activities and projects, it would like to help Switzerland secure its leading global position and innovative strength over the long term. Initiative Switzerland is financed by F.G. Pfister Holding AG and the dividends generated by the holding company. The annual «Prix Suisse» honours a prominent person who has made outstanding contributions to Switzerland and demonstrated courage, creativity and innovation.

Initiative Switzerland is headed by **Stefan Linder**, co-founder, long-standing CEO and delegate of the Swiss Economic Forum.

www.initiative-schweiz.org

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www.initiative-schweiz.org/medien

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