

Alexis Schwarzenbach



BA (Oxford University)

PhD (European University Institute, Florence)

PROFILE

I inspire people with stories

Historian and stakeholder manager with 25 years of experience in academia, culture, higher education and philanthropy

[LinkedIn](#)

PERSONALITY

analytical, precise, pragmatic
committed, communicative, convincing
creative, curious, image-savvy
efficient, resolute, polyglot

PERSON

*27 Dec 1971 in Zurich
Swiss citizen
widower, two adult sons
swimming, reading, gardening

LANGUAGES

German (native speaker), English (C2),
French (C2), Italian (C1),
Spanish (C1)

CORE SKILLS

Research & Storytelling

Passionate analyst and communicator of complex subject matters

Co-operations & Partnerships

Multilingual stakeholder manager with excellent networks

Project Development & Management

Strategic thinker with a pragmatic approach to implementation

Team-orientated Leadership

Agile leader and supervisor of interdisciplinary teams

Fundraising

Proven track record in securing financial resources

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2021 – CEO, filanda della storia GmbH, Thalwil/Zurich**
Research, communication and consulting in the field of history
- 2012 – 2025 Board member, Vice-President (2021-2025), Zurich Silk Association (ZSIG)**
Development of the philanthropy division, project analysis and oversight, stakeholder management
- 2012 – 2021 Lecturer, 2015 Professor, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts**
Acquisition and leadership of interdisciplinary research projects, cross-disciplinary teaching at undergraduate level
- 2011 – 2017 Safeguarding Corporate Archives**
Fundraising and safeguarding of corporate archives with analogue, digital, and material holdings
- 2009 – 2011 Senior Curator, Swiss National Museum, Zurich**
Exhibitions, fundraising, expansion of collections
- 2000 – Freelance Author and Curator**
Conception, fundraising and realisation of books and exhibitions, including a dozen monographs
- 1998 – 2000 Editor, Scalo Publishing, Zurich, Berlin, New York**
Project responsibility for multilingual publications in photography and contemporary art

PRO BONO ACTIVITIES

- 2006 – Board Member, Alkoholfreies Volksheim zum Rosengarten, Thalwil**
Supporting cultural initiatives
- 2014 – 2023 Board Member, Textile Museum St. Gallen**
Executive recruitment, leadership, fundraising
- 2020 – 2022 Board Member, Foundation for the Promotion of the Swiss Economic Archives (SWA)**
Fundraising

DETAILED RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENTS

2000 –	Freelance Author und Curator Concept development, fundraising and implementation of book and exhibition projects in collaboration with publishers and museums in Switzerland and abroad. Publication of over a dozen books in German and English, several of which have been translated into French and other languages. Numerous book chapters and academic essays.
2012 – 2025	Board Member, Vice President & Managing Director, Zurich Silk Association (ZSIG) Development of the philanthropy division for annual grants between CHF 1–2 million. Strategic planning including stakeholder analysis, mission statement, compliance, code of conduct, and procedures for applications. Development of the organisation's website, project analysis and monitoring, establishment of partnerships and collaborations with other grant-making institutions (e.g. Engagement Migros & Pro Helvetia). Enabling complex projects within the business strategy, establishment of the secretariat.
2012 – 2021	Lecturer, 2015 Professor, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts Leader of a research group, acquisition of interdisciplinary research projects totalling CHF 2,424,627 in third-party funding. Principal Investigator of a Swiss National Science Fund project in collaboration with ETH Zurich (CHF 178,918) implementing a PhD. Establishment of international collaborations (e.g. Japan). Cross-disciplinary undergraduate teaching focusing on design history (lectures, specialised modules, bachelor thesis supervision), supervising PhD projects.
2011 – 2017	Safeguarding Corporate Archives Project design and funding to safeguard corporate archives (including WWF Switzerland and various Zurich silk manufacturers). Complex archives containing analogue, digital and physical material (e.g. textiles, objects, photographs). Collaboration with renowned public institutions (e.g. Swiss National Museum, State Archives of the Canton of Zurich, Archive for Contemporary History at ETH Zurich), as well as archival service providers. Project budget per archive ranging from CHF 50,000 to CHF 800,000, funding provided by public and private institutions (foundations, corporations, individuals).
2009 – 2011	Senior Curator, Swiss National Museum, Zurich International research for a special exhibition on the history of WWF, the environmental organisation founded in Switzerland in 1961. Researching a comprehensive history of WWF written in English, published simultaneously in German and French. Curating the show as a dual installation comprising an indoor section and the Footprint Garden outdoors. Securing important, six-figure third-party funding from various foundations and Migros Cooperative Zurich.
1998 – 2000	Editor, Scalo Publishers, Zurich, Berlin, New York Comprehensive management of book projects in the fields of photography and contemporary art. Editing texts in German, English and other languages. Developing book concepts in collaboration with photographers and artists. Layout design in collaboration with graphic designers. Overseeing the printing process at Steidl, Göttingen/Germany; project coordination with partner institutions including Kunsthaus Zurich, Fondation Cartier, Paris, and the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

EDUCATION

2013	Certificate in University Teaching, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Art
1997	Doctorate, European University Institute, Florence, Italy
1994 – 1997	European University Institute, Florence, Department of History and Civilisation
1994	Bachelor of Arts, Oxford University, Final Honour School of Modern History
1991 – 1994	Balliol College, Oxford, subject: Modern History
1990	Matura, Freies Gymnasium Zurich, Typus A (Latin & Ancient Greek)

SCHOLARSHIPS & RESIDENCIES

2004 – 2006	Swiss National Science Fund, Bern: Fellowship for Advanced Researchers for residency at Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen, Germany
2002 – 2003	Janggen-Pöhn Foundation, St. Gallen: Scholarship for residency at Istituto Svizzero, Villa Maraini, Rome
2000 – 2002	Swiss National Science Fund, Bern: Marie Curie Individual Fellowship for residency at Oxford University Modern History Faculty
1994 – 1997	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, Bern: PhD-Fellowship at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy
1992, 1993	Balliol College, Oxford, Adams Fund, Cecil Spring-Rice Fund: Research grants

EXHIBITIONS & PUBLICATIONS (SELECTION)

forthcoming	Glanz der Seide. Geschichte der Zürcher Seidenindustrie , together with Monika Burri and Roman Wild, 2 Volumes, Hier und Jetzt Verlag: Zurich 2027
2013	Emil Schulthess. Eine Retrospektive , Fotostiftung Schweiz, Winterthur, curator together with Martin Gasser Emil Schulthess. Fotografien, 1950 – 1990 , Limmat Verlag: Zurich 2013
2012	Orte der Lehrerinnen- und Lehrerausbildung im Kanton Zurich , Pädagogische Hochschule, Zurich 2012, exhibition consulting
2012	Königliche Träume. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Monarchie von 1789 bis 1997 , Collection Rolf Heyne: Munich 2012
2011	WWF. A Biography , Swiss National Museum, Zurich, Curator. Further venue: Solliden Palace, Sweden Saving the World's Wildlife. WWF – The first 50 years , Profile Books: London 2011
2008	Annemarie Schwarzenbach. Eine Frau zu sehen , Museum Strauhof, Zurich, Curator. Further venues: Literaturhaus Berlin, Rätisches Museum Chur Auf der Schwelle des Fremden. Das Leben der Annemarie Schwarzenbach , Collection Rolf Heyne: Munich 2008
2008	Annemarie Schwarzenbach. Eine Frau zu sehen , Kein & Aber: Zurich 2008. First edition of a short story from the author's estate, translated into French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch and Hebrew
2005	R.S. Fotoalben von Renée Schwarzenbach-Wille , Fotomuseum Winterthur, 2005, Curator together with Urs Stahel. Further venue: Ortsmuseum Sust, Horgen Renée Schwarzenbach-Wille. Bilder mit Legenden , Scheidegger & Spiess: Zurich 2005
2005	Das verschmähte Genie. Albert Einstein und die Schweiz , DVA: Munich 2005
2004	Die Geborene. Renée Schwarzenbach-Wille und ihre Familie , Scheidegger & Spiess: Zurich 2004
2000	Unclassified: A Walker Evans Anthology. Selections from the Walker Evans Archive , The Metropolitan Museum of Art & Scala, Zurich, Berlin, New York 2000, Editor together with Jeff Rosenheim
1999	Portraits of the Nation. Stamps, Coins and Banknotes in Belgium and Switzerland, 1880 – 1945 , Peter Lang: Bern, Frankfurt am Main, New York 1999

SAFEGUARDING CORPORATE ARCHIVES (SELECTION)

Dates	Archive	In cooperation with
2015 – 2017	Desco AG, Zurich	docuteam AG, Baden / Zentralbibliothek Zurich
2012 – 2017	Gessner AG, Wädenswil	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Heer & Co. AG, Thalwil	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Seidenwebschule Zurich	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Stehil & Co. AG, Obfelden	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Stünzi & Co. AG, Horgen	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Weisbrod-Zürcher AG, Hausen am Albis	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2012 – 2017	Zwicky & Co. AG, Wallisellen	Staatsarchiv des Kantons Zurich / Swiss National Museum
2011 – 2016	Swiss Textiles, Zurich	docuteam AG, Baden / Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, ETH Zurich
2011 – 2015	WWF Switzerland, Zurich	docuteam AG, Baden / Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv, Zurich

EDITED BOOKS (SELECTION)

Michael Ackerman, End Time City, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Merry Alpern, Shopping, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain Paris (Hg.), Issey Miyake. Making Things, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Martin Gasser & Jakob Tuggener Foundation (Hg.), Jakob Tuggener. Photographs, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 2000

Rebecca Horn, Tailleur du cœur, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Melinda Hunt & Joel Sternfeld, Hart Island, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Elisabeth Janus, Deichtorhallen Hamburg & Marion Lambert (Hg.), Veronica's Revenge. Contemporary Perspectives on Photography, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

André Magnin (Hg.), Malick Sidibé, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Boris Mikhailov, Unfinished Dissertation, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Louise Neri & Public Art Fund New York (Hg.), Looking Up! Rachel Whiteread's Water Tower, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Helmut Newton, Pages from the Glossies. Facsimiles, 1956 – 1998, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Eugenia Parry, Crime Album Stories. Paris 1886 – 1902, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 2000

Gilles Peress & Eric Stover, The Graves. Srebrenica and Vukovar, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Astrid Proll, Baader-Meinhof. Pictures on the Run, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Fazal Sheikh, The Victor Weeps. Afghanistan, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1998

Juergen Teller, Go-Sees, Scalo: Zurich, Berlin, New York 1999

Karlheinz Weinberger, Photos 1954 – 1995, Andreas Züst Verlag, Zurich 2000