

Media Release, December 17, 2018

## **Bern celebrates 50 years since the moon landing**

**A science festival will be celebrated in Bern on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the moon landing from June 27 to 30, 2019. The University of Bern and Bern Welcome are delighted that the European Space Agency ESA is supporting Bern's activities as a partner.**

On July 16, 1969, the Apollo 11 Mission started its successful flight to the moon. On board was the Solar Wind Composition Experiment (SWC). This solar wind sail was planned and evaluated by Prof. Dr. Johannes Geiss at the University of Bern's Physics Institute. It had been first set up on the moon by Buzz Aldrin.

Due to Bern's close connection with the moon landing, a festival will be held in summer for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the moon landing in and around Bern. The plans include such diverse formats as a science festival on Bundesplatz square, a "Night of the Stars" with observatories and astronomical societies in the Canton of Bern and a rocket construction competition for schoolchildren. Personalities from the fields of space travel, space research and the space industry will come to Bern and take a look at the great moments in the history of space travel in lectures and panel discussions. The new developments in space research and where the journey might take us in the future will also be examined. The aim of the festival is to inspire the broad public with space research and scientific questions and to underline the great importance of Switzerland as a center of knowledge and research in this field.

The University of Bern and Bern Welcome are delighted that the European Space Agency ESA has pledged its support for the festival. "This unique moment of the moon landing and the planned festival for the general public are gaining international appeal as a result," says Christian Leumann, Rector of the University of Bern. A partnership with Starmus is no longer an option, as the negotiations with those responsible were unsuccessful and aborted. Marcel Brühlhart, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bern Welcome, is also looking forward to exciting Science Days in Bern: "The festival is a great opportunity for Bern to present itself internationally as an innovative capital and university city. The fact that ESA is supporting us in this makes us proud." More information about the anniversary celebration will be communicated in February 2019.

### **Information:**

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