



Moussonstr. 17 Student-house



**Getting to Know the Moussonstr. 17
Student-house — Its Mission and Infra-
structure, the Costs of Accommodation
and the Application & Admission Process**

Last update: March '22

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Summary

The Moussonstr. 17 Student-house is one of the four student houses that belong to the public charity organisation "Foundation for Reformed Student Houses" (Stiftung Reformierte Studentinnen- und Studentenhäuser) in Zürich.

It is [located](#) where Zürich's central university quartier meets a residential area of traditional villas in the Fluntern neighbourhood: about 5-10 minutes walk from the central buildings of the ETH and the UZH and about 30 minutes by public transport from the main buildings of the PH Zürich, the ZHAW and the ZHdK.

The Key Features of this Student-house Include:

- It provides home to a lively, international community made up of 19 students in their BSc or MSc studies
- Vacancies become available at the beginning of the semesters, usually [in twin rooms](#)*
- Shower rooms and toilettes are available on the corridors; furthermore, several community rooms, such as kitchen, tea-kitchen, dining room and TV room, as well as a garden, are also part of the infrastructure that the Student-house provides
- Common activities, such as the organization of community dinners on a weekly basis, as well as of seasonal excursions and various other events are the integrated part of the life of the Moussonstr. student-community
- The resident students are responsible for the everyday management of the household, including, for example, the management of selected waste collection, and so on
- The minimum length of stay in the Student-house is one full semester and at the same time its inhabitants are eligible to stay in the building for a maximum of 2 years

* *Twin room: a room containing two single beds. After having spent about two semesters in a twin room, usually (however not always), it becomes possible to move into a single room.*

What is New?

During the summer in 2018, the student rooms went through a partial refurbishment and brand-new central kitchen was also installed. In a next step, during the summer 2019, the main staircase of the building was also renovated.

What is Next, When You Are Interested?

Please read this entire document towards developing an understanding concerning what you can expect from living in the Moussonstr. 17 Student-house, as well as to learn how the admission procedure works! Whenever new vacancies become available, you will find a relevant call for applications on the [website of the Student-house](#).

1) About the Student-house

The mission of the Moussonstr. 17 Student-house is to provide affordable accommodation in a sociable environment for students starting their bachelor or master studies in Zürich and thus to help their integration into the student communities of the city.

It is located in a historical building, which was built in 1902 by that time city architect of Zürich, [Gustav Gull](#). In the early 1940ies, the inheritors of Gull sold the building to the predecessor of the [Foundation for Reformed Student Houses](#) and ever since then it has hosted students.

Placements in the building are available in six twin rooms and seven single rooms, altogether for 19 students. As of spring 2022, the Student-house was home to an international, coeducational student community that represented 11 nationalities!

Community life and the active contribution of the inhabitants to the everyday operation of the building is a central character of the Moussonstr. Student-house.

Examples of relevant activities include:

- The organisation of social events, such as seasonal excursions, semester party, various game events and so on are the integrated part of everyday life in the Student-house.
- House-dinners: each Wednesday during the semester the students, together with the house-leaders, organise a community dinner. A team of three students cook and serve the dinner. After the dinners, the students discuss ongoing topics in the House (such as the tidiness of the public rooms, planned community events, and so on), as well as other topics in the interest of the student-community.
- Regular household tasks: each of the students carries out some regular activities on the weekly basis in connection to the operation of the House. Examples of regular house tasks include the disposal of selected waste at the public collection points and/or cleaning in the kitchen, and so on.
- Other types of household tasks: such as "rotating tasks" (for example: the preparation of the dining tables for the dinners) and "ad hoc tasks" (for example: exceptional cleaning in the kitchen as per the needs).
- Sponge parties: once per semester, in an informal atmosphere, the student community carry out a thorough cleaning of the student kitchen, as well as of the other public rooms of the building. These "parties" last for three hours and include a community meal upon finishing with the relevant activities.

2) Admission Criteria

According to the mission of the Student-house, accommodation is provided for students who are at the beginning of their BSc or MSc studies at one of the recognised higher education institutions of Zürich.

Occasionally, on the exceptional basis, students in vocational education, or PhD students, moreover BSc or MSc students, who are already at a later stage in their studies, are also accepted.

Students from all over the world are welcome, regardless of their nationality and/or religion. Recommended age range at the time of moving in: 18 – 22 y/o.

3) Available Infrastructure

Furniture provided in the student rooms includes study desks, beds and wardrobes (see also the illustrative photos provided on the website). Bedclothes are available on request.

Shower and bathrooms, as well as unisex toilets are available on the corridors.

Other facilities and infrastructure of the Student-house include:

- Fully equipped student kitchen
- Dining room, equipped with an upright piano
- Television and reading room
- Tea kitchen
- Laundry room, equipped with a washing machine and a tumbler dryer
- Roof- and side terraces
- Garden, equipped with a roofed bicycle shed, a ping-pong table, as well as with garden tables and garden chairs
- Wireless Internet connection

Please note that no car-parking place is provided!

4) Costs of Accommodation

Accommodation in twin rooms in the Student-house cost between CHF 340.- and 380.- per person per month and between CHF 430.- and 560.- per person per month in single rooms, depending on the size and the location of the rooms. This rent includes the utility costs, such as electricity, heating, and so on.

Besides, the students pay also a household cost contribution fee in the amount of about CHF 250.- per semester (the exact amount of this fee is the subject of periodic recalculation, based on actual spending). This fee covers the cost of the weekly community dinners, as well as of also other household-related expenses, such as related to the purchase of kitchen supplies, the municipal waste fee to be paid for the city of Zürich, and so on.

Please note that a tenancy deposit¹ in the worth of CHF 400.- is requested at the time of moving in!

Additional, minor expenses of stay include:

- ❖ The residents of the Student-house automatically become members in the [Students' Association](#) of the Foundation of Reformed Student-houses in Zürich. This membership fee is CHF 5.- per year.
- ❖ Outside the budget of the Student-house, the student-community intermittently (based on prior agreement within resident students of the building) runs its own, so-called Students' Fund, and it collects about CHF 15.- per student per semester for community purposes, such as for the organisation of a semester party, and so on.

5) Vacancies

Typically, most of the new tenants join the Student-house at the start of the autumn semester (with the 1st of September, sometimes already with the 1st of August) and a smaller number of them at the start of the spring semester (with the 1st of February).

Please note:

- Vacancies during the semesters become available only in very exceptional cases: for example, when one of the tenants is leaving the Student-house unexpectedly.
- The minimum length of stay in the Student-house is one full semester, while students are allowed to stay for a maximum of 2 years;
- Most typically, vacancies for new residents become available in twin rooms (in a single room: when it has not been taken by one of the 'continuing' residents of the building);

¹ You pay a tenancy deposit to give the Student-house protection in case you leave without paying the rent or cause damage to the property or its contents. If you will have paid all the rent due and caused no damage, the full amount of your deposit will be returned at the end of your tenancy.

- Usually, four to five vacancies become available in the building with the 1st of September and two to three, however sometimes even less, with the 1st of February;
- Decision concerning where exactly an accepted new student is going to be located within the building (such as on which floor and in which room exactly) usually becomes available only during the final stage of the admission process;

6) Application and Admission

Whenever new vacancies become available in the Student-house, a call for applications is published on its [website](#) and hence interested students are invited to send their application.

A complete application package consists of:

- 1) An Application Form filled out on your name,
- 2) Your motivational letter (recommended: in the volume of one page), and
- 3) Your résumé (recommended: in the volume of two pages), including your photo.

Individual visits to the Student-house before or during the application process are possible according to the availability of the house-leaders: please send a relevant inquiry per e-mail, well in advance of the planned visit.

In the admission process, some of the most important aspects under consideration include:

- The personal profile of the applicants, based on their résumé and motivation letter.
- The aim is to sustain a diverse and at the same time balanced student-community with respect to the field of studies, the levels of education (BSc/MSc), moreover also in terms of nationality and gender.
- Frequently, but not exclusively, preference is given to students who are in their first study year in Zürich.
- Also exchange students are welcome to join the Student-house, not least because they bring additional cultural diversity to the student-community.
- A good level of English is a must, in order to be able to actively participate in the everyday life of the Student-house.

Please note that the Student-house has no "waiting list": each of the applications that will have arrived by the specified deadline are going to be considered equally!

The steps of the selection process are as follows:

- i. A good number of applicants are invited for a personal, or online interview
- ii. In a next step, the vacant places are filled in based on the results of the interviews
- iii. The aim of the Student-house is to provide feedback to each of the applicants about the results of the admission process by the end of May and respectively by mid-December.

7) The Management of the Student-house

The Moussonstr. Student-house has been co-managed by József Slezák (also known as Joseph Slezák) and Sybille Stemmler (house-leaders), since July 2012.

Sybille (born in 1981, the citizen of Switzerland, at present she works ~ 15% for the Student-house) holds an MSc. degree in Environmental Sciences. In addition to this, she holds also post-graduate degrees in pedagogy and energy engineering. Next to her role as the co-leader of the Moussonstr. Student-house, she has a part-time job in an engineering office in Zürich, where she works on the energy refurbishment of buildings. At present, Sybille is a part-time student in the field of applied psychology at the Zürich University of Applied Sciences.

József (born in 1976, the citizen of Hungary, at present he works ~ 25% for the Student-house) holds a BSc. degree in Mechanical Engineering, as well as MSc degrees in Information Engineering and in Economic Sciences. Next to his role as the co-leader of the Moussonstr. Student-house, he is an independent environmental-social scientist with focus on the topic of Sustainable Consumption and Production in a globalised world ([Sustainable Development Goal 12](#), see also: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jszlezak>). Since autumn 2020, Jozsef is PhD candidate in the field of environmental sciences and policy at the Central European University in Vienna, Austria.

Sybille and József's first daughter, Anna was born in May in 2013 and their second daughter Edina was born in February 2016.

8) Student Self-governance

In the Student-house, there is a student self-governance scheme in place.

Key principles and elements of this scheme include:

- The student residents of the building, both at the individual and at the community levels, take a high level of responsibility for the smooth operation of the public spaces in the everyday, including with respect to the tidiness/cleanliness of the central kitchen, and so on.

- Consequently, topics and issues, for which it is likely that the student-community can find solutions on its own, are to be discussed and decided primarily at the level of the students.
- Simultaneously, the 'housing community' of the Student-house includes both the student-community and the house-leaders. In view of their ultimate responsibility concerning the functioning of both the community and the building, it is the latter that define the long-term institutional structures of the housing community, such as the house-rules, the task scheme, and so on – naturally, however, in consultation with the student-community.
- Each semester, the student-community elects two house representatives. The general responsibilities of them include the facilitation of a smooth everyday life among the student residents (in connection to the household tasks, community events, and so on), as well as the representation of the student-community towards the house-leaders.
- The self-administered Students' Fund enables the residents of the building to make some smaller investments to the benefit the entire community (such as herbs garden, and so on) and/or to organise a variety of social events throughout the semester.

9) Preventive COVID-19 Measures

The corona-virus situation has had a considerable impact on the everyday life of the student-community. Since March 2020, following the relevant rules and recommendations of the Swiss state and the Canton of Zürich, there have been a range of pertinent preventive measures in place that the residents of the building have had to respect related to their stay in the Student-house.

Since March 2022, as the result of the relaxation of the pertinent rules and recommendations by the relevant state authorities, there remain only few preventive measures in place in the building, as follows:

- The number of student residents in the building is still reduced from 19 to 16, temporarily.
- Hygiene rules: e.g. the residents of the building are recommended/expected to wash their hands every time when they arrive home, and so on.
- Protocol for self-isolation within the building.