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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **SSEF celebrates 50-year anniversary with gathering of key industry leaders and opinion-makers in Basel**



*Industry leaders and opinion-makers gather to celebrate SSEF's 50th anniversary in the prestigious Hans-Huber Saal of the Stadt Casino in downtown Basel. The day began with a conversation between Max Fawcett (left) head of the jewellery department of Christie's in Geneva and SSEF's Dr. Laurent Cartier (right). Photo: SSEF*

BASEL, SWITZERLAND: SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 – For 50 years, the Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF has been at the forefront of scientific gemmological research and testing to support a thriving gemstone and jewellery trade. In tribute of both its mission and accomplishments,

some 150 industry leaders and opinion-makers from around the world gathered in Basel on September 1 and 2 to celebrate the golden anniversary.

Founded by Swiss trade organisations in August 1972, from its earliest days the independent Swiss Foundation for the Research of Gemstones SSEF and its lab, the Swiss Gemmological Institute, has sought to enhance knowledge, scientific research and transparency in the gemstone and jewellery trades. They did so through the efforts of expert staff and ongoing collaboration with academic institutes and technology developers in Switzerland and elsewhere.

Events organised during the anniversary celebration included behind-the-scenes tours of the SSEF lab and a beautiful gala dinner that rounded out the festivities. But the centrepiece of the gathering was a symposium in the Hans-Huber Saal of the Stadt Casino in downtown Basel. Entitled “Linking Past and Future: Visions for a Thriving Gem & Jewellery Trade,” its roster of speakers included representatives from major brands and auctions houses such as Anna Hu Haute Joaillerie, Christie’s, De Beers, Gellner Pearls, Sotheby’s, The Muzo Companies and Van Cleef & Arpels. Renowned jewellery historian Joanna Hardy, vintage dealer Marianne Fisher and SSEF’s director Dr. Michael S. Krzemnicki also shared their insights and expertise.



**Photographed during the SSEF golden anniversary celebration (from left to right): Martin Häuselmann, incoming SSEF Foundation Board President; Charles Abouchar, SSEF Board Member; Dr. Gaetano Cavaliere, President of CIBJO, the World Jewellery Confederation; Dr. Michael S. Krzemnicki, Director SSEF; and Marc-Alain Christen; outgoing SSEF President. Photo: SSEF**

A wide range of themes were addressed, including the role of auction houses, emerald mining in Colombia, provenance in the diamond industry, the state of the pearl sector, the power of gems throughout history, the rough-to-jewel journey of the iconic Lesotho Legend diamond, the role of digital in the vintage market, valuation concepts for jadeite, the past and future of gem testing, the process of designing bespoke jewellery; and sourcing of rare gems.

Video recordings of the presentations and discussions can be found [here](#).

Response to this event has been so positive that SSEF has decided to organise another symposium in 2026 in Basel, as a forum for fostering discussions and the exchange of knowledge and opinion within the trade.

“For our industry, it is indispensable that we have widely respected and solidly independent institutions, dedicated to scientific research and excellence, and the pursuit of knowledge such as SSEF,” said Dr. Gaetano Cavalieri, President of CIBJO, the World Jewellery Confederation, who travelled from Italy to attend the event. “Through tireless work and a readiness to build and share gemmological expertise, it is a cornerstone of the absolutely critical effort to maintain consumer confidence in the jewellery industry.”

"We are thrilled that so many industry leaders have joined us in celebrating this very special milestone in Basel," said Dr. Michael S. Krzemnicki, director of SSEF. "50 years of scientific excellence was and continues to only be possible through the dedication of past and present SSEF team members, and a strong focus on scientific research."

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#### **About the SSEF**

The Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF, which is part of the Swiss Foundation for the Research of Gemstones (SSEF: Schweizerische Stiftung für Edelstein-Forschung), was founded by trade organisations in 1972 and works independently on a scientific basis. It is structured as a foundation under the aegis of Switzerland's Federal Department of Home Affairs. The function of its laboratory is to analyse precious stones and issue test reports for diamonds, coloured stones and pearls. Members of SSEF Laboratory are also engaged in research and education, in connection with leading universities or with other gemmological laboratories.