



Federation
of Swiss
Private Schools

Autumn Conference 2026

When AI becomes a companion



Wednesday, 4 November 2026

13h15

Federal Palace, Bern



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Private Schools

Conference Theme

Artificial intelligence is no longer confined to search engines, writing assistants, or administrative systems. It is increasingly taking on more relational forms of interaction, appearing as a conversation partner and learning companion that can support reflection and student development.

This development raises a profound question for schools:

What happens when AI no longer appears only as a tool, but as a companion?

AI companions offer new opportunities for learning, reflection, and student development. At the same time, they raise fundamental pedagogical, ethical, and organisational questions. How can such systems support students, teachers, and school leaders without weakening human judgement, educational responsibility, or the relationships at the heart of school life? What responsibilities do schools bear toward students, teachers, parents, school leadership teams, governing bodies, and society as a whole?

The Autumn Conference invites school leaders to reflect on one of the key challenges of the coming years: not simply how to bring AI into schools, but how to do so in a way that remains human-centred, pedagogically meaningful, ethically responsible, and institutionally well governed.

Following the conference programme, participants are invited to continue the discussion during an **apéritif reception** in the **Galerie des Alpes**.

Interested participants will also have the opportunity to discover the Federal Palace through **informal guided tours** led by National Councillor **Dr Gerhard Pfister**.



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Programme



FSPS President and National Councillor **Dr Gerhard Pfister** will open the conference and welcome delegates. He will also kindly conduct informal guided tours of the Federal Palace following the presentations from the guest speakers.



Dr Michael Gerlich is a Human Systems Architect, author, advisor and international keynote speaker on the impact of artificial intelligence on human judgement, decision-making and agency.

He will explore the opportunities and risks of AI companions in education and examine the different levels of responsibility involved when schools introduce artificial intelligence with a focus on how schools can implement AI in a way that is responsible, human-centred, and pedagogically meaningful.



Following the keynote, **Yann Houry** from **Institut Florimont** in Geneva will share the perspective of an FSPS member school on the use of AI companions.

He will explain how AI companions are approached not as a fashionable technological add-on, but as part of a carefully considered school development process.

The conference will be held bilingually. Dr Michael Gerlich's keynote will be delivered in German, while Yann Houry's contribution will be delivered in French. Simultaneous interpretation into the other language will be available for both presentations.

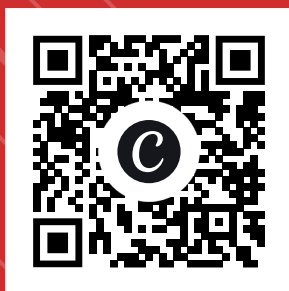


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Logistics and Registration

The conference will commence at **13h15**. Delegates are welcome to **arrive from 12h30 onwards**, using the the **Federal Terrace entrance**. Since security procedures for entering the Federal Palace are comprehensive and may take some time, **participants are kindly requested to arrive early and bring a valid passport or identity card** to ensure a timely start.

Schools may register up to three delegates, using the QR code below:



Capacity at the Federal Palace is limited. We therefore encourage early registration. We reserve the right to process registrations on a first-come, first-served basis and, if necessary, to limit the number of participants per school.

