iimt off to the Sustainable Living Tour
An educational and broadening journey

Tuesday, 10th of October 2017
A Fribourg delegation, with representatives from the iimt (University of Fribourg), the school of engineering and architecture (HEIA-FR), the EPFL, the city and canton of Fribourg, the blueFACTORY, the Swiss Federal Office of Energy as well as industry partners were heading off to Denver (USA). Main goal was the support and the visit of the Swiss Team at the Solar Decathlon in Denver, but at the same time to get in touch with institutions, researchers and companies active in the field of smart living, sustainability and smart cities.

Wednesday, 11th of October 2017
First stop of the day was at the Alliance Center for Sustainable. A non-profit organization dedicated to transforming sustainability from vision to reality. Its role is the advancing of government and community efforts towards a more sustainable environment. It has programs in Building Innovation, Sustainable Energy, and the Hub with approximately 50 tenants, build a pool of innovative ideas and a showcase for sustainability and work spaces of the future.

On the same occasion, a roundtable and discussion with Denver’s Office of Sustainability, including Jerry Tinianow, Chief Sustainability Officer, and Sonrisa Lucero, Sustainability Strategist took place.
The afternoon was dedicated to a visit of the DaVita World Headquarter by MOA. DaVita World Headquarters is designed to provide a sustainable and healthy workplace. This first interesting day was rounded off with the visit of the ASES Solar 2017 conference at UC Denver Tivoli and the following Emerging Professionals Reception at St. Cagetans.

**Thursday, 12th of October 2017**

The day started with a private tour at the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) and a meeting with Dan Powers, Executive Director of CO-LABS. Located in the Colorado foothills, with more than 1700 employees and researchers, the National Renewable Energy Lab is the only federal laboratory dedicated to the research, development, commercialization, and deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. The Delegation had the opportunity to visit the laboratories and to follow the researchers leading and innovative activities.
After a short lunch stop at New Terrain Brewing with Denver’s best coal fired pizza, a visit of the Solar Decathlon Village was part of the programme. This was not only the moment to see the Swiss Solar Decathletes live in competition, but also to get familiar with the solar powered houses of all other competitors. An amazing afternoon with plenty of inspiring and creative ideas how solar powered houses can contribute to a more sustainable future.

The end of the day was the moment to celebrate with the Swiss Solar Decathletes. After their long and intense stay in Denver, the Delegation was more than pleased to share a moment with them around some Ping-Pong tables and beers at the ACE EAT SERVE in Denver Downtown, a restaurant and place with sustainability in mind.

**Friday, 13th of October 2017**

In Boulder we had the chance to meet Amory Lovins, Co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute. An institute founded in 1982 to pioneer the soft energy path and a building with solar power, natural light on all sides and an innovative, energy efficient design with a Net Zero footprint.
Right after this inspiring visit, we were invited for a Q&A round with the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Institute, a joint multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary institute between the University of Colorado Boulder and the NREL addressing important, complex problems in energy. By the same opportunity, we could catch a glimpse into their laboratories and research activities.

The afternoon was devoted to a meeting with the Boulder Economic Council. Boulder, quite similar to the city of Fribourg in terms of size, activities, industry relations and research, takes over a pioneering role in energy and smart cities. Several council members presented their energy activities, their community engagement, and how they activate residents and industry partners to shape the region of Boulder. An inspiring meeting with plenty of ideas how to become and live in a smart city.

**Saturday, 14th of October 2017**

Saturday, the big day! 9:30 - The winner announcements of the Solar Decathlon Competition 2017. In an atmosphere full of suspense with all participating Solar Decathletes, Daniel Simmons opened the final award ceremony.

Although the Swiss Team, with its NeighborHub, has already won several category prizes during the week, the overall winner of the Solar Decathlon was to be announced.

Finally, the Swiss Team did it. The Swiss Living Challenge won the Solar Decathlon competition with its NeighborHub. An extraordinary sign of achievement and a well-earned prize for the students efforts during the last two years. As the jury members said: Simply put, there's nothing else like it.
The iimt and the University of Fribourg would congratulate all students for this excellent result. We are proud of your achievement, and are looking forward to welcoming you and the NeighborHub back in Switzerland.

This unforgettable journey was filled with interesting topics, many highlights, plenty of research ideas and the cherry on top – the first prize at the Solar Decathlon contest.
More information available on
www.iimt.ch
www.swiss-living-challenge.ch
www.solardecathlon.gov

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