

Eawag Seminar Invitation

Venture Capital meets water – pushing innovative approaches to tackle global water-related challenges

Speaker Dr. Helge Daebel, Water Emerald Technology Ventures, Toronto, Canada

When October 1, 16.00 – 17.00

Where Online via Zoom, contact seminars@eawag.ch for access details.

Abstract Technology-based solutions for the water sector are of growing demand. Strong macro drivers like population & economic growth, urbanization and climate change require resilient, adaptive and resource efficient approaches (market pull) while new technical developments push the boundaries of what is possible (technology push). This leads to different forms and avenues of innovation, sometimes driven by research entities, sometimes by water utility, by larger companies, by small or mid-sized ones and sometimes venture capital gets involved as well. Emerald has a 20-year history of investing in this environment including successful “exits”, i.e. trade sales of innovative companies.

In this talk, I will discuss the role of venture capital in the global water tech space by explaining incentives for venture capital, how this can be beneficial to the water sector and where the limitations are. I will refer to typical market entry barriers for innovative solution and highlight the growing trend of water tech accelerator programs. Finally, I will share some journey details of one of our success stories – Optimatics, an Australian company offering a software service for decision support for optimal water & sewer network planning (acquired by SUEZ in 2018).