



CHES talk

Friday, 24 April 2026
2.15 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Alte Kantonsschule
Rämistr. 59; RAA-G-01
Universität Zürich

Marc Abrahams

Master of Ceremonies of the Ig Nobel Prize
Celebration, editor and co-founder of the Annals
of Improbable Research

Why and How the Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony is Moving to Europe

Chair

Prof. Dr. Mike S. Schäfer
Professor of Science Communication
and Director of CHES, UZH

The Ig Nobel Prizes honor achievements that make people LAUGH, then THINK. The prizes bring international attention to many researchers who pursue unusual questions. The annual Ig Nobel Prize ceremony is a source of interest and joy for the science community, and a source of good stories for news organizations. This year, after 35 years based in the USA, the ceremony will move to Zurich. Ig Nobel founder Marc Abrahams will discuss why and how the move is happening. He will also discuss how you can be involved.

Background: The annual Ig Nobel Awards honor 10 unusual or trivial scientific achievements, highlighting the eccentric side of science. The first Ig Nobel Prize ceremony happened in 1991 at the MIT Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The 1992, 1993, and 1994 ceremonies happened in MIT's Kresge Auditorium. In 1995 the ceremony moved across town, to Harvard University, where it happened every year until the Covid pandemic in 2020 rendered in-theater events impractical. The Ig Nobel Prize ceremonies during the first four pandemic years happened exclusively online. The ceremony has been webcast every year, beginning in 1995 (one of the very first events video-broadcast on the internet). In 2024 the ceremony returned to MIT. In 2025 the ceremony was held at Boston University. In 2026, the ceremony is moving to Switzerland: The Ig Nobel Prize ceremony will be held on September 3, 2026, in Kongresshaus Zurich.

Marc Abrahams is an American mathematician and scientific editor. He is the editor and co-founder of the Annals of Improbable Research and the master of ceremonies at the annual Ig Nobel Prize celebration, which he founded in 1991. Abrahams graduated from Harvard College with a degree in applied mathematics. He is a former editor of the Journal of Irreproducible Results.

Das CHES will die Selbstreflexion der Hochschulen und der Wissenschaften stärken und die Herausforderungen thematisieren, welche durch die veränderten gesellschaftlichen Erwartungen von den zunehmend autonomen Hochschulen bewältigt werden müssen.