Musée Bolo

Museum of Computer Science, Digital Culture and Video Games

Sponsorship

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Musée Bolo

Museum of Computer Science,
Digital Culture and Video Games

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Musée Bolo

A word from the
president

*Robin François
president of the Mémoires
Informatiques foundation*

During the twentieth century, our civilisation entered the digital age. Under the influence of information technology, both our society and the human condition have undergone profound changes. Sadly, too few cultural institutions have sought to help people understand what is at stake.

Thanks to a collection built up over the last 25 years and that is unique in Europe, Musée Bolo has been filling this vacant role as a digital decoder.

Our considerable ambitions are nevertheless limited by our modest means. The tireless work of the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo and the current premises are no substitute for the immense potential that can be realised in a fully-fledged museum.

Exhibiting its collections in larger spaces in order to show them at their best advantage or preparing temporary exhibitions that will explain the present and future of digital technology, are objectives that can only be achieved by professionalizing the museum and hiring permanent staff to manage, repair, maintain, guard, catalogue and market it.

The first priority is to ensure the financing of the storage facilities needed to safeguard the museum's digital heritage. Its collections grow each year thanks to donations from collectors or companies looking for a place to house their obsolete computers.

This is a heritage which, thanks to the innovative concept adopted by the museum and to its unique centre of expertise, fully justifies Musée Bolo becoming the museum of digital culture.

Let's build
this project
together

"To perpetuate Musée Bolo is a great challenge. But the many achievements of the past (exhibitions, projects, events) and the quality of the collections highlight the potential of the project."

Yves Bolognini, founder of Musée Bolo and member of the council of the Mémoires Informatiques foundation.

The Musée Bolo
project

An unprecedented project in Switzerland

The museum's ambition is to tell the story and preserve the history of computers, digital technology and video games in Switzerland and elsewhere, from 1950 to the present day, as these fields have completely revolutionised society and our daily lives.

A space in keeping with the scale of the museum's collection would make it possible to continue conserving, archiving, researching and exhibiting. A suitable place would be a showcase for the technical, scientific, contemporary and artistic heritage that is Musée Bolo's collection.

Musée Bolo currently provides a permanent exhibition within the EPFL and accessible to the public during the opening hours of the university buildings. As the exhibition can only present a tiny part of the collections, this precious heritage is stored in depots around Lausanne.

Our project plans to create a museum that would bring together the exhibition and the entire collection on the same site.

The Mémoires Informatiques foundation is planning to acquire a building to house the complete collection and present it to visitors in an innovative and user-friendly exhibition space.

Musée Bolo will be able to take visitors on a journey and act as a real bridge between the world of machines and the human world, not only to educate the public but also to prompt it to reflect and start a dialogue with it.

Based on a museographic sketch designed in collaboration with Marc Atallah, the director of the Maison d'Ailleurs in Yverdon-les-Bains, Musée Bolo would present itself in an innovative and modern form, combining interactivity, time travel and contemplation.

A suitable space in keeping with the scale of the museum's collection will allow conservation, archiving, research and development activities to be carried out properly

The new Musée Bolo

For example, a striking structure formed by the roof supports would allow hanging exhibition modules to float above a completely free and open visitor reception area. Various areas would be set up on the ground floor: café, multi-purpose room, library and shop, areas that could easily evolve as the exhibitions come and go.

The ground floor would also house part of the permanent exhibition with high showcases spanning two levels; a nod to the entire collection which would be located in the basement, and above all an invitation to take a museum tour.

This route would take shape in a choreography of boxes, platforms and walkways suspended from the structure. Tightrope walkers for a day, visitors would discover the exhibition through a 3D exploration of the building.

Brauen Wälchli Architects is our preferred partner for the realisation of this project

The exhibitions

Through seven semi-permanent rooms, which will be able to evolve through their furniture and lighting according to the themes of the exhibitions, the public will be able to follow a narrative path in which each space will be an element of the story being told.

Tell the story of digital innovation and explore the future using the collections as a guide
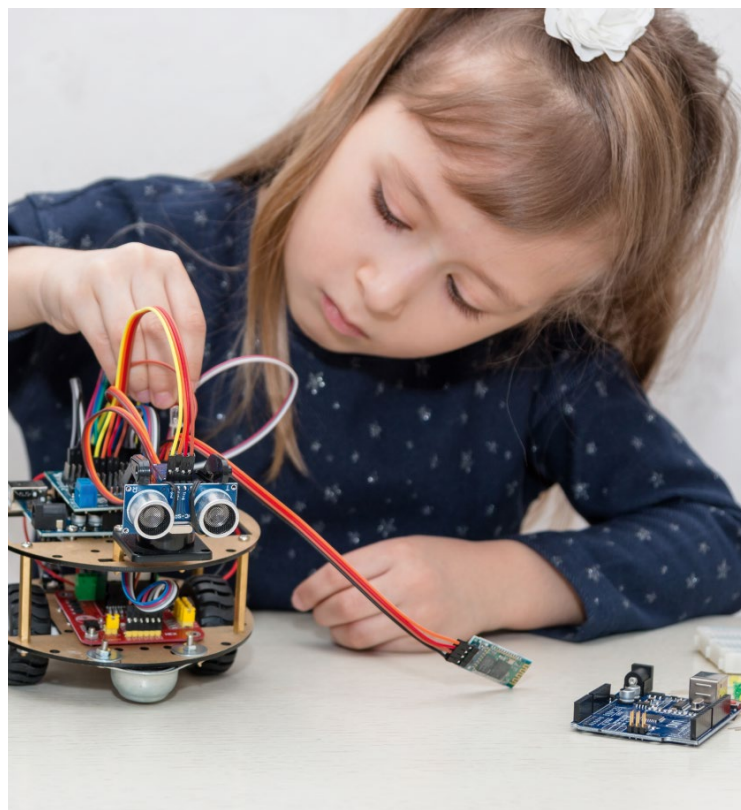
[The < Start > room]

The exploration will begin, after a reception area and shop, with an introductory room that will act as a trigger for the story that will be told by the exhibition, highlighting the precursors. Then, depending on the layout required by the story the exhibition wishes to express, several rooms will attempt to develop the exhibition from various perspectives.

[The < Informatik > room]

Through the computers, peripherals and software that form the heart of Musée Bolo's collections, together with an interactive section, visitors will be able to experience the exhibition's theme in a concrete way. A static section will allow the presentation of rare or fragile pieces, highlighting the design or exceptionality of the objects.

[The < Games > room]

This area will present the second core of Musée Bolo's collections: video games, the largest entertainment industry in the world. It will contain an area allowing visitors to play a selection of works and a "Discovery" area that will let them reflect on the phenomena specific to games.

[The < Media library > room]

This room will let visitors pause for a while to view educational films (interviews, documentaries) or to explore documents relating to the exhibition via multimedia terminals.

[The < Lab > room]

This room will be an extension of the "Media Library" room. It will be an invitation to get moving and experiment. This room will have an important role in cultural mediation for young audiences or school visits.

[The < Helvetica > room]

The visit will continue with a "Helvetica" room, highlighting Swiss creative innovation in the fields of IT, technology and videogames.

[The < Alt > room]

Finally, an anthology of objects such as books, magazines, art installations and artists' visions will complete the exhibition's narrative, opening it up to aesthetic and plastic perspectives.

Flagship themes will be explored in greater depth, such as:

- Computer science and science fiction
- Supercomputers and the brain
- Digital culture in today's society
- Interfaces as artefacts of the five senses
- Computers and the environment

We need you

The Mémoires Informatiques foundation, which has set itself the task of preserving and safeguarding computer-related objects, is in danger. The economic stability of the museum is fragile. The exhibition is housed in a space with public access and with no possibility of generating ticket sales.

The museum has to finance storage facilities in order to safeguard its precious heritage. Despite being selective in its acquisitions, this heritage is constantly growing and diversifying thanks to donations from many collectors of computer objects.

Currently run entirely by volunteers, the museum needs be able to recruit full-time professionals.

The museum is looking for generous partners who are aware of the challenges of the digital age. Help the museum pursue its ambitious project whilst participating in the life of the museum and enjoying certain benefits in exchange.

Current storage room

Consolidated provisional budget: Foundation + Association

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue				
Guided tours, events, shop sales	11,000	14,000	18,000	24,000
Membership fees	3,000	3,500	4,000	5,000
Total	**14,000**	**17,500**	**22,000**	**29,000**
Expenses				
Storage premises: rent, insurance, electricity, maintenance	47,000	47,000	61,000	61,000
Administrative costs, projects, events	15,000	16,000	17,000	18,000
Conservation: salary, social security charges, expenses	-	-	26,000	51,000
Total	**62,000**	**63,000**	**104,000**	**130,000**
Difference	- 48,000	- 45,500	- 82,000	- 101,000
Reserve	35,000	-	-	-
Grants, Bolocoins, sponsors, private donations	13,000	45,500	82,000	101,000

Take part in the adventure !

Become our VIP

You are a private individual nostalgic for the machines you have used, you are enthusiastic about today's digital technologies, you are a collector.

Become our sponsor

You are a public administration, an organization dedicated to education and teaching. You are a company active in computer science, in digital technology or in various other economic areas and wish to enhance your image.

Help the museum pursue its ambitious project whilst participating in the life of the museum and enjoying certain benefits in exchange

Collect BoloCoins
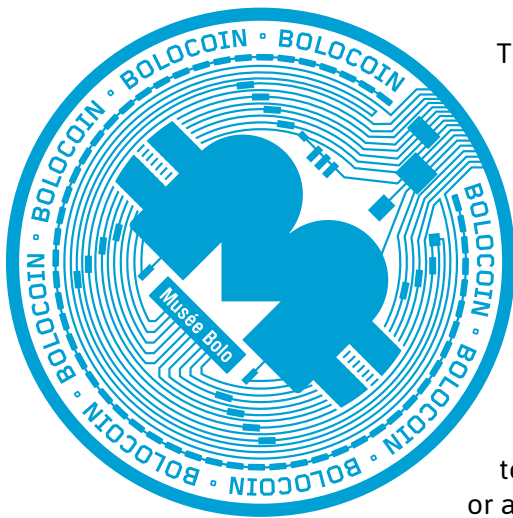
The support subscription provides financial assistance to the museum periodically. You can also make a one-off donation. For every CHF 10.- donated to the museum, you will receive 1 BoloCoin. Thanks to the BoloCoins you have accumulated in this way, you will have a choice of rewards to choose from.

The list is available in the reward catalogue. BoloCoins are valid for 5 years.

For example, a donation of CHF 200.- entitles you to 20 BoloCoins which will get you a museum mug or a T-shirt.

Support subscription

Monthly amount in CHF	Annual amount in CHF	Accumulated BoloCoins per year
10	120	12
20	240	24
50	600	60
100	1,200	120
200	2,400	240
500	6'000	600
1,000	12,000	1,200

Certain forms of partnership are tax deductible

Every CHF 10.- donated to Musée Bolo generates a BoloCoin. BoloCoins have a life span of 5 years.

Jean-Daniel Nicoud, the inventor
of smaky®, microcomputers
in French-speaking Switzerland

Sponsors, your advantages

Musée Bolo creates an image of dynamism and education. By taking part in its projects, you make your company stand out among your customers, potential clients and employees.

Image and visibility

The museum's exhibitions are currently located in the heart of the EPFL. They are visited by more than 6,000 people (excluding students) per year. Your presence through individual plaques or an inscription on the sponsors' wall gives you excellent visibility. The museum's website has 10,000 visitors per year and offers several spaces where your logos can be displayed. The museum takes part in four major events each year, including the Night of the Museums of Lausanne and Pully. The museum's partners appear on all the printed material produced for each occasion.

Guided tours

We organise guided tours of the museum and temporary exhibitions for your employees, customers and prospects. Alternatively, you can visit the museum's computer storage rooms, a veritable Aladdin's cave!

Exhibition on your premises

Our team can also organise, on your company's premises, a mini exhibition of the computers it has designed or used in the past.

Sponsorships

Temporary exhibitions can be sponsored. We also have the skills to restore and restart rare and unique computers. Sponsorship of an exhibition or of a restored machine are rare privileges because they are widely publicised in the media.

VIP, your advantages

You take an active part in the life of the museum by benefiting from the various counterparts according to your desires. The BoloCoins that you have accumulated offer you, for example, the possibility to take a guided tour of the storage rooms, to receive a cup with your favourite computer or to obtain a VIP entrance to a museum event.

Thank you to all our future VIP

Thank you to all our future sponsors

Musée Bolo **today**

A unique collection

Musée Bolo has one of Europe's largest IT legacies, including historical computers, peripherals (printers, readers and monitors), game consoles and calculators. They are complemented by a very large quantity of software, documentation and numerous publications, several thousand books, magazines, newspapers and personal archives, not forgetting video games (games, consoles and peripherals). The fame of the Musée Bolo extends far beyond the borders of Switzerland.

The collections of Musée Bolo continue to grow. Some of the acquisitions are rare, such as the Cray or IBM's Blue Gene supercomputers, the only survivors in a mad race for ultimate performance. Collectors offer new or almost new computers in their original boxes. Sometimes, it is a unique collection that joins the museum, such as the Bruno Bonnell collection, which illustrates 24 years of the life of Infogrames, a French video game company.

A Swiss heritage

Historical evidence of the development of IT in Switzerland since the 1950s has an important place in the collection. For example, Musée Bolo exhibits the first commercially available Swiss computer, the Cora 1 (1963), used notably at Expo 64 in Lausanne, the complete family of Smaky microcomputers, designed at the EPFL, the first mice behind the success of the Logitech company, as well as the Lilith workstation created in 1977 by Niklaus Wirth, the inventor of the Pascal programming language.

Contraves Cora 1, 1963

Diser Lilith, 1982

Dépraz Mouse, 1981

SCS Gigabooster, 1992

Smaky 1, 1975

15,000
books and magazines
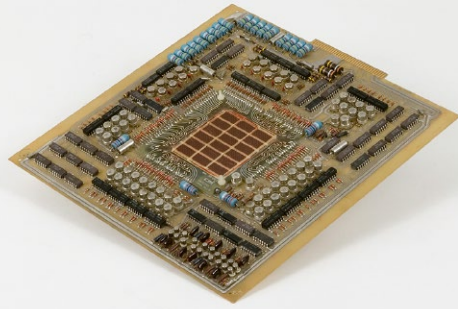
Ferrite core memory

Atari 400, 1979

Apple Macintosh, 1984

Disappeared media

Popular Electronics Magazine, 1975

Video games, Bruno Bonnell fund

8,000
softwares

Teletype Model 33, 1963

Nintendo VirtualBoy, 1995

Commodore 64, 1982

Commodore 8296, 1977

Atari 2600, 1977

Bobst Graphic Scrib, 1978
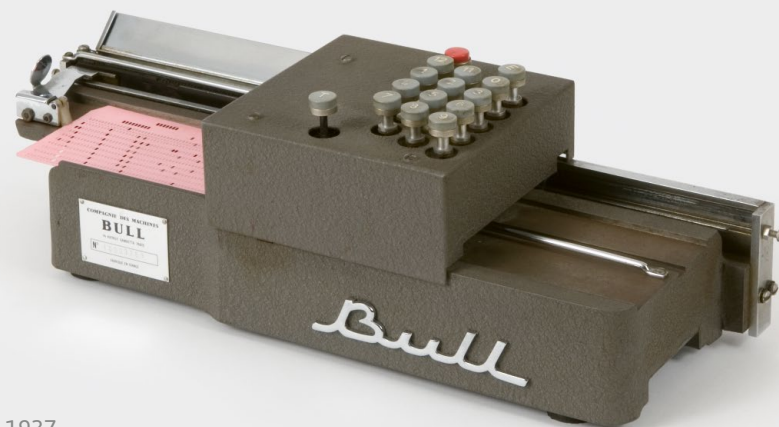
Bull P80, 1937

Digital PDP-11/20, 1970

Moore-Reed Acoustic Coupler, 1980

5,000
computers
and video game
consoles

A skill center

The Mémoires Informatiques foundation that runs the Museum is supported by the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo. This association brings together a dynamic team of computer enthusiasts and professionals. The association supervises several areas of expertise in order to ensure the tangible and intangible conservation of this heritage, its technical know-how and its presentation to the public.

The voluntary members of the association catalogue, restore and restart machines and software. Their know-how is unique in Switzerland, whether it is recovering data from obsolete media or operating a giant computer whose once prosperous manufacturer has fallen into oblivion. They also organize demonstrations, museum tours and animate several annual events in order to make the digital heritage accessible and alive.

Companies, museums and other institutions in Switzerland and abroad call upon the association. Recently, the museum collaborated with the National Museum in Zurich on the temporary exhibition Games, which retraces the history of video games, by lending two of its flagship pieces from Switzerland and the United States respectively: a Smaky 6 microcomputer (1976) and a NeXT computer (1985).

Through technical feats, the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo has put prestigious machines back into operation, such as the Blue Gene/P supercomputer donated to the museum by the IBM company. An IBM RS/6000 computer was also refurbished and then loaned to the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) as part of a heritage conservation project linked to the World Wide Web. The association's team also built a replica of the Apple 1 microcomputer, a legendary machine of which only a few copies remain in the world.

Students in conservation-restoration at the Haute-Ecole Arc de Neuchâtel are also involved in the conservation of computer heritage and carry out research projects in collaboration with the museum. These are just a few examples of what the museum can achieve thanks to the unique skills of those who run it.

"To understand the digital shift affecting our societies today, it is essential to situate it within a narrative of technical and cultural practices spanning many years. In this context, French-speaking Switzerland is fortunate to have an institution like Musée Bolo, which understood the issues relating to the patrimonialization of computing devices before many others. Within their collection of national significance can be found the bases of computer games which have no equivalent elsewhere, and which constitute invaluable material for researchers from Switzerland and abroad."

UNIL Gamelab, Lausanne

A unique center of **expertise**
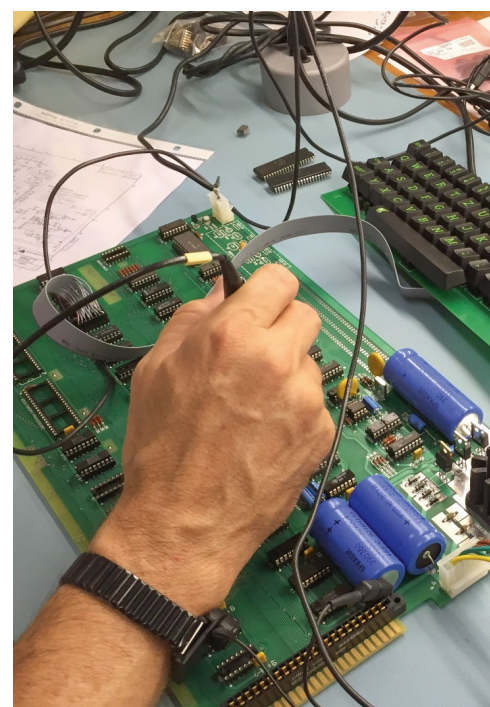
Historical background

The history of Musée Bolo begins in 1995 with a young computer science student who picks up an Apple II in the street. The first item in a collection that quickly became a passion for Yves Bolognini. With the help of his friends, he creates an association and sets up a first exhibition in the School of Computer and Communication Sciences at the EPFL. This is the beginning of the adventure for Musée Bolo.

In 2007, the Mémoires Informatiques foundation is created with the aim of safeguarding and displaying this computer heritage in its best light. The founding members are chosen among the pioneers of the discipline. Their mission is the management of the museum and the preparation of various museum projects.

In 2011, Programmed Disappearance renews the museum's image. With its provocative title, this exhibition approaches the history of computer science from a playful angle, without being reduced to a simple chronology. The five investigative strands detail why and how the computer is becoming progressively smaller, camouflaging itself, passing unnoticed, dematerializing in the cloud, and competing with man. Paradoxically, it has never been so present in a world where computing is everywhere and nowhere. An eponymous bilingual French-English book, Programmed Disappearance, perpetuates the exhibition.

The exhibition inaugurates a series of projects developed along the lines of the same concept: deciphering the digital revolution and its present and future technological prowess in the light of objects from the past.

"In 2009, for the 20th anniversary of the WWW, CERN called on the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo to overhaul the first web server. Without the skills of their team we would not have been able to boot up this historic machine. Knowledge preservation and a stock of totally irreplaceable and impossible to manufacture parts are key. The museum therefore plays an essential role in this area, not only for Switzerland but for all of Europe and the world."

Robert Cailliau, Word Wide Web pioneer

Yves Bolognini
founder of
Musée Bolo

The
Programmed
Disappearance
exhibition

History of the main events of Musée Bolo

Musée Bolo is:

- Member of the Association des Musées Suisses (AMS) since 2004
- Member of the Nuit des Musées de Lausanne et de Pully (AMLP) Association since 2005

2007
Creation of the Mémoires Informatiques foundation

Since 2004
Nuits des Musées de Lausanne et de Pully (between 600 and 1,500 visitors)

2020
Collaboration with and loan of items to the Centre Mondial de la Paix à Verdun
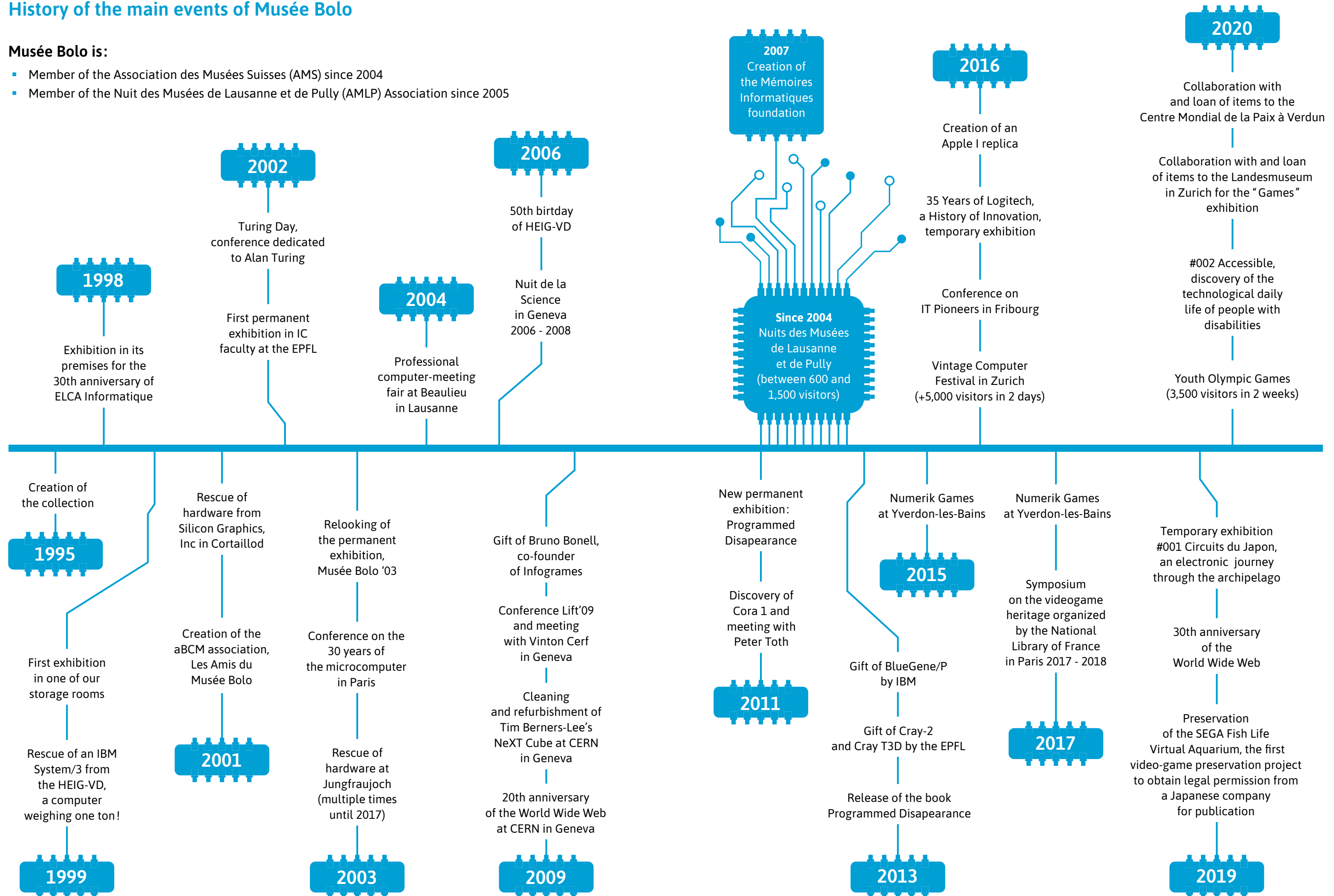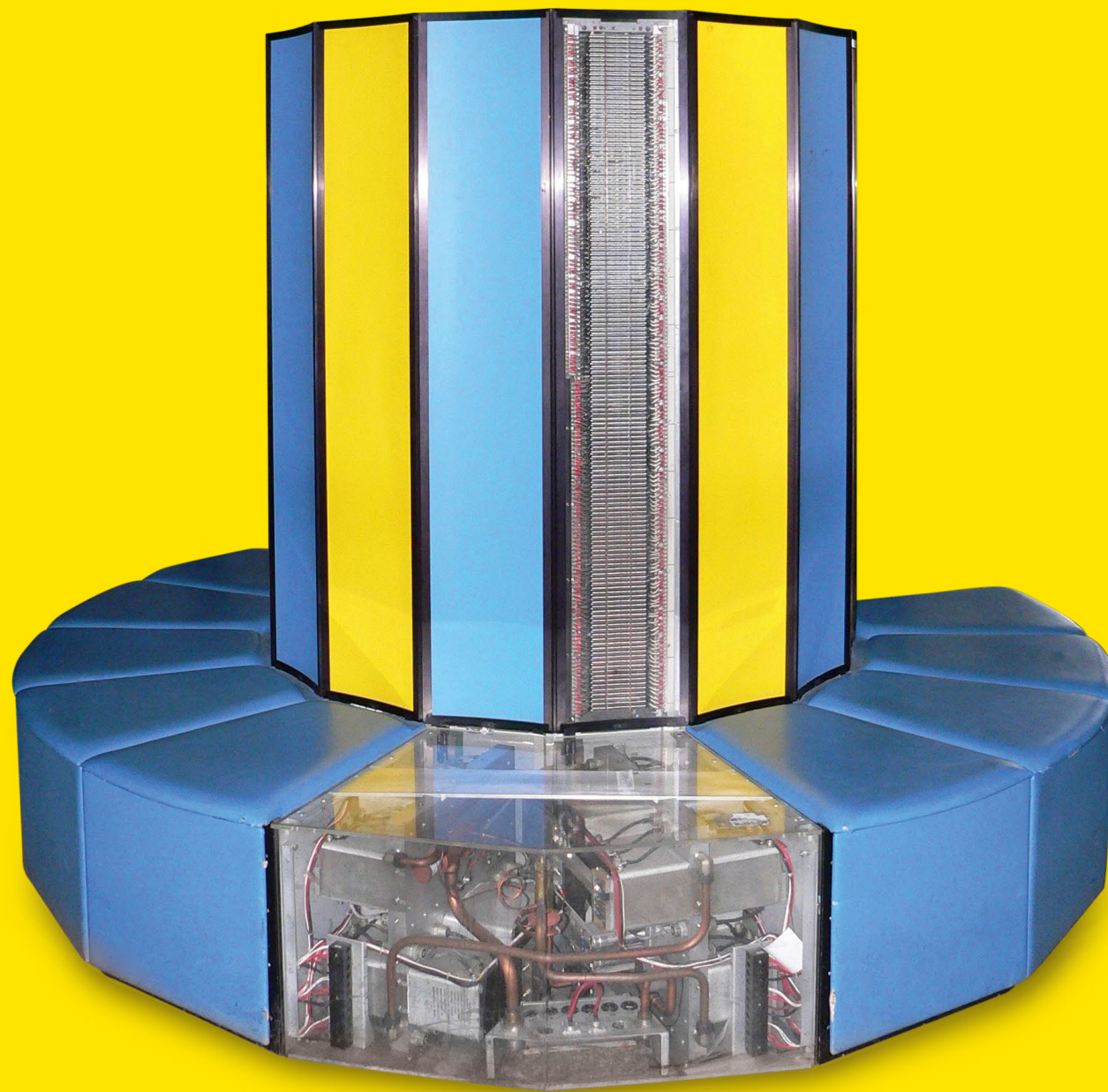
Collaboration with and loan of items to the Landesmuseum in Zurich for the "Games" exhibition

#002 Accessible, discovery of the technological daily life of people with disabilities

Youth Olympic Games (3,500 visitors in 2 weeks)

2016
Creation of an Apple I replica

35 Years of Logitech, a History of Innovation, temporary exhibition

Conference on IT Pioneers in Fribourg

Vintage Computer Festival in Zurich (+5,000 visitors in 2 days)

2002
Turing Day, conference dedicated to Alan Turing

First permanent exhibition in IC faculty at the EPFL

2006
50th birtday of HEIG-VD

Nuit de la Science in Geneva 2006 - 2008

2004
Professional computer-meeting fair at Beaulieu in Lausanne

1998
Exhibition in its premises for the 30th anniversary of ELCA Informatique

Creation of the collection

Rescue of hardware from Silicon Graphics, Inc in Cortaillod

Relooking of the permanent exhibition, Musée Bolo '03

Gift of Bruno Bonell, co-founder of Infogrames

New permanent exhibition: Programmed Disapearance

Discovery of Cora 1 and meeting with Peter Toth

Numerik Games at Yverdon-les-Bains

Numerik Games at Yverdon-les-Bains

Temporary exhibition #001 Circuits du Japon, an electronic journey through the archipelago

1995

2015

First exhibition in one of our storage rooms

Creation of the aBCM association, Les Amis du Musée Bolo

Conference on the 30 years of the microcomputer in Paris

Conference Lift'09 and meeting with Vinton Cerf in Geneva

Gift of BlueGene/P by IBM

Symposium on the videogame heritage organized by the National Library of France in Paris 2017 - 2018

30th anniversary of the World Wide Web

Rescue of an IBM System/3 from the HEIG-VD, a computer weighing one ton!

2001

Rescue of hardware at Jungfraujoch (multiple times until 2017)

Cleaning and refurbishment of Tim Berners-Lee's NeXT Cube at CERN in Geneva

2011

Gift of Cray-2 and Cray T3D by the EPFL

2017

Preservation of the SEGA Fish Life Virtual Aquarium, the first video-game preservation project to obtain legal permission from a Japanese company for publication

20th anniversary of the World Wide Web at CERN in Geneva

Release of the book Programmed Disapearance

1999

2003

2009

2013

2019

Cray X-MP/48, 1982

"The field of computer science being relatively young, the conservation of its heritage has not yet received the attention it deserves. Musée Bolo became aware long before any of us of the need to work towards this preservation and has been able, for more than 20 years, to gather together a collection that is unique in Switzerland and with world wide exposure."

Patrick Amaru, Head of the IT Department, Canton de Vaud

Project partners

Architects

BRAUEN WÄLCHLI
ARCHITECTES

Institutional partner

ECUBLENS
ville et campagne

Past partners

Main partners

EPFL

Associate partners
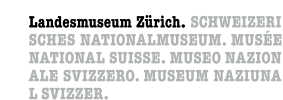
PAXELS

CLIC
ASSOCIATION DES ÉTUDIANTS EN
INFORMATIQUE ET COMMUNICATION

Cultural partners

Maison d'Ailleurs

Lausanne musées
je vais aux musees.ch

LA NUIT DES MUSÉES

E-GAMP

UNIL | Université de Lausanne
Gamelab - Groupe d'étude sur le jeu vidéo

numerik games

LA LUDOTHÈQUE FRANÇAISE

ASSOCIATION MO5
Préserver Explorer Rejouer

Landesmuseum Zürich. SCHWEIZERISCHES NATIONALMUSEUM. MUSÉE NATIONAL SUISSE. MUSEO NAZIONALE SVIZZERO. MUSEUM NAZIUNAL SVIZZER.

centre mondial de la paix - verdun
des libertés et des droits de l'homme

VMS AMS
Verband der Museen der Schweiz
Association des musées suisses
Associazione dei musei svizzeri

MHL
MUSÉE HISTORIQUE LAUSANNE
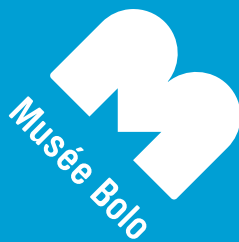
Sponsors

DFi
Data First

Crésus

camp tocamp

Sponsorship

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