

Milestones

Half a century of intergenerational debates

The St. Gallen Symposium was founded in 1969 as a response to the international student unrests of 1968 and has since then been organised by the International Students' Committee (ISC), a student initiative at the University of St.Gallen. Currently, this platform for dialogue welcomes more than 1.000 participants with over 60 nationalities every year. Personalities such as Kofi Annan, Josef Ackermann, Mohammad Khatami, Laurence D. Fink, Dominic Barton, Sigmar Gabriel and Christine Lagarde have attended the symposium in recent years.

- 1969** The St. Gallen Symposium was founded by five students of the University of St.Gallen: Wolfgang Schürer, Urs Schneider, Franz Karl Kriegler, Clemens Ernst Brenninkmeyer, Terje I. Wölner-Hanssen
- 1970** First St. Gallen Symposium – formerly known as the “International Management Symposium” and the “ISC-Symposium” - takes place with 100 Leaders of Today and as many students
- 1972** [Club of Rome](#) study was presented at the third symposium
- 1974** Creation of the St. Gallen Foundation for International Studies to safeguard the continuity of the organization Former CEOs till today: Gerard & Ursula Stoudman and Wolfgang Schürer (1975-1993), Eugen von Keller (1995-1997), Andreas Kirchschläger (1997-2008), Philip Erzinger (2008-2017), Beat Ulrich (2018 to date)
- 1979** [Max Schmidheiny](#) Freedom Prize has been presented at the St. Gallen Symposium for the first time
- 1989** St. Gallen Symposium is one of only three institutions in Switzerland that runs its own server.
- 1989** Foundation of the [St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award](#) – one of the largest student essay competitions worldwide
- 1993** St. Gallen Symposium opens an office at Harvard University. Two Harvard students are responsible for the American contacts and run the Harvard-St. Gallen International Business Club.
- 2002** The ISC runs the [International Federalism Conference](#); commissioned by the Swiss Federal Council.
- 2003** The ISC Club of Japan is established as an organization to promote the Japanese participation in the symposium.
- 2005** Keynote speaker [Christine Lagarde](#)
- 2006** [Kofi Annan](#) attends the St. Gallen Symposium to receive the Max Schmidheiny Freedom Prize in person which was awarded to him in 2003.
- 2010** The ISC organises an international conference on democracy and decentralisation under the patronage of the Swiss Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
- 2012** To strengthen the St. Gallen Symposium in Asia, an office was opened in Singapore.
- 2019** The St. Gallen Symposium kicks off the next fifty years with a brand new corporate identity.
- 2021** The St. Gallen Symposium celebrates its 50th anniversary in May 2021 due to a postponement in May 2020.
- 2023** Together with the [Club of Rome](#), marking the 50th anniversary of “The Limits to Growth”, the St. Gallen Symposium launches the joint impact initiative [A New Generational Contract](#) at its 53rd edition. Goal: promoting cross-generational leadership for a nature-positive economy.
- 2025** With a stronger focus on geopolitics, as global challenges are increasingly interlinked, the St. Gallen Symposium welcomes its highest number of ministers and state representatives to date.