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Supplement to the press release

Portrait of the 2016 Marie Heim-Vögtlin Prize winner

Zoë Lehmann Imfeld

After graduating in English literature from the University of Sussex (GB), Zoë Lehmann Imfeld, born of a Swiss father and British mother, joined her husband in Switzerland, where she continued her academic studies by correspondence. Her postgraduate studies were crowned first with a master's degree in English literature from the Open University (GB), in 2008, then with a master's in theology from the University of Nottingham (GB), in 2011. She obtained distinctions in both degrees. Her two children were also born during this period. Zoë Lehmann Imfeld then embarked on a doctorate at the University of Bern, while continuing to work part time (60%) for a publishing house in order to contribute to the family income.

From 2012 to 2014, the young scientist was awarded an MHV grant to fund the second part of her doctoral studies and is now able to devote herself fully to her research. "I wonder whether I would have been able to complete my PhD without this grant. It would certainly have taken many more years and would have completely changed my career trajectory", says Zoë Lehmann Imfeld. The researcher further points out that "the MHV grant was crucial to my PhD, but the support of my husband and family, and my supervisor's great sensitivity to the needs of a working mother were also essential". Zoë Lehmann Imfeld is continuing her research at the Centre for Space and Habitability and teaches in the English Department of the University of Bern.