

WE ARE ETH – Episode 30

With Pascal Mathis, ETH Alumni, entrepreneur and Co-Founder of GetYourGuide and Wingman Ventures

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[00:00:00] **Pascal Mathis:** My first few investments I wanted to get, I did not want it to, but somehow I'm a hands on guy and I wanted to almost get involved operationally, which is a big mistake as an investor. You sit on the backseat of the car and you try to scream sometimes more to the left, more to the right, but this is the only thing you can do and avoid road roadblocks. It's exactly.

[00:00:25] **Susan Kish:** In this episode, I'm talking with Pascal Mathis, ETH alumni and entrepreneur, who co- founded Get Your Guide, ETH's first tech unicorn, and Wingman Ventures, a leading Swiss pre-seed fund. This is We Are ETH, and I am Susan Kish, your host.

Pascal, welcome. Tell us about your time at the ETH. Did I understand correctly, you study electrical engineering?

[00:00:56] **Pascal Mathis:** That's correct.

[00:00:57] **Susan Kish:** Not computer science.

[00:00:59] **Pascal Mathis:** We did a bit of programming, but I was never too good at that. I was rather with electrons, et cetera, starting 2001. It was tough. We still had the Vordiplom all the older generations will still remember, but all went well. I was able to

[00:01:14] **Susan Kish:** What is a Vordiplom? What does that mean?

[00:01:17] **Pascal Mathis:** So after the first year and the second year in, in Grundstudium this was the big exams and the failure rate was pretty high during the summer break. You really had to study, or at least in my case, the more genius ones, they we're able to have some vacation.

[00:01:31] **Susan Kish:** And was it a four-year program or three year program or how many years was the Vordiplom?

[00:01:36] **Pascal Mathis:** This was the first two years.

[00:01:39] **Susan Kish:** Got it. And then what happened after that? Then you did a master's or?

[00:01:43] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. And I wanted to also break out a bit. So I did first an internship at a robotics company. That's actually where I found out that it's interesting to, to work on real life projects. And it was even a startup. It was only 12 employees. And thereafter I went to Barcelona for two semesters. This was also invaluable.

[00:02:03] **Susan Kish:** Barcelona must have been great. It's such a beautiful city.

[00:02:06] **Pascal Mathis:** It was fantastic. The only problem is that the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya was also tough.

So yes, I had a bit more free time than in Zurich, but still I had to study.

[00:02:18] **Susan Kish:** I understand. And you study electrical engineering there as well?

[00:02:22] **Pascal Mathis:** That's correct.

[00:02:22] **Susan Kish:** And you ate lots and lots of tapas, I'm sure.

[00:02:25] **Pascal Mathis:** A lot. Yep. It's really a nice city. Yep.

[00:02:29] **Susan Kish:** Absolutely. I can understand. So tell us a little bit about why you chose to be an entrepreneur.

Many electrical engineers go and work at ABB or Schneider Electric or places like that. What caused you to make that choice?

[00:02:44] **Pascal Mathis:** So I'm sure you're familiar with ETH Juniors. This is the student organization which acquires projects from the industry and then work on it. And a friend of mine did this, also an electrical engineer.

After Barcelona, I went straight into this club and somehow, I liked this a lot to acquire these projects and work on them and I was then after two months, I became president of this group. So very cold water.

[00:03:10] **Susan Kish:** Fast riser.

[00:03:11] **Pascal Mathis:** Exactly. This is what my aunt said. Yeah. And after this experience, I had this entrepreneurial bug a little bit, but nevertheless, I started off as all my friends in engineering positions. I went to Siemens.

[00:03:24] **Susan Kish:** I'm sure that was lovely and I'm sure you had great benefits and you had an office and all the things that go with it.

[00:03:32] **Pascal Mathis:** So, there was even a carpet in the office, so it was really nice.

[00:03:35] **Susan Kish:** And did you have windows? That's the big question.

[00:03:38] **Pascal Mathis:** The big windows. Yep. I'm like for my entire career, I chose my career in nice offices.

Also now with Wingman, I really always want to have nice offices with big windows.

[00:03:49] **Susan Kish:** Oh, good. Very good. But what caused you to leave the paradise of Siemens?

[00:03:55] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah, we had already in the evening. So during the day I was working at Siemens, I was a product manager for switch operating systems for trains. Some of us cannot believe it.

[00:04:05] **Susan Kish:** That's sort of cool.

[00:04:07] **Pascal Mathis:** Exactly. And it was a bit, yeah, to be honest, a bit slow. The whole thing, like people at half past four, they would clean their desk slowly and then so that they are ready to leave at five. And this was not how I worked. I had more energy. So in the evenings, we started to work on our little platform, which later became Get Your Guide.

[00:04:27] **Susan Kish:** You had a side gig.

[00:04:28] **Pascal Mathis:** That's right. Exactly.

[00:04:29] **Susan Kish:** Wow. And what was your side gig?

[00:04:32] **Pascal Mathis:** This was the, like the, together with four friends from ETH, we thought that we could revolutionize the way we travel. And it was the earliest version of Get Your Guide.

[00:04:42] **Susan Kish:** Now, there's a lovely origin story about Get Your Guide, about one of your friends being stuck in Beijing for Model UN for the ETH or something.

There's usually something like that. Can you tell us that story?

[00:04:53] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah, absolutely. So Johannes, he's a German who cannot speak Chinese. He went to China for the Model United Nations, as you stated. And then only a day later, His best friend, Tao Tao, who is also German, but speaks Chinese if you listen to the name.

So these first 24 hours were terrible for Johannes because he could not even take a cab or go to the cinema or anything. And as soon as he had his friend Tao coming over, who speaks the language, who was familiar with everything, they had a great time. And that was our first idea. When they came back, we were in the Mensa we were discussing, why does it have to be like this? Why can't we have a friend everywhere we go who shares interests and shows us the cities? That was the basic idea.

[00:05:38] **Susan Kish:** Yeah. Sort of a peer-to-peer global network of pals, local pals.

[00:05:43] **Pascal Mathis:** That's completely right. And since it was such a good idea, we had to code it. And four months later we had it and nobody would book. So we had in total I think four, four bookings and it turns out our friends and moms did them in the end. Yeah. It was not a big success.

[00:06:00] **Susan Kish:** So how did you pivot? Why did you pivot?

[00:06:03] **Pascal Mathis:** Yep. What we had, we were interacting with the tour operators already and they were interested in our platform. They basically told us this internet thing is tough for us. We don't know how this works and probably it's here to stay. And why don't you sell our tours, which are already existing on your platform? And we just listened to our customers and switched it to B2C how it is today.

[00:06:26] **Susan Kish:** Very cool. And Get Your Guide. You got an enormous amount of money from SoftBank right before COVID, which was probably brilliant.

[00:06:36] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. Johannes, my co-founder, he has just this gut feeling, or I don't know what it is but about the fundraiser, he always picks the right moment to fundraise. So I was always thinking, why should we go for the next race?

It's so tedious and annoying, but in the end, he always was very smart about the timing. Yes, this was. Great luck or good timing to, to just raise before COVID.

[00:07:01] **Susan Kish:** Because my bet is your earnings, your revenue just went through the floor. I bet it did anybody book through you during COVID?

[00:07:09] **Pascal Mathis:** No, it was insane. I was so sure that we are on a stable mission. But then this tiny virus came around and no plane left the ground and so the revenues went basically down to zero.

[00:07:20] **Susan Kish:** How did you, how did they survive? They had money in the bank.

[00:07:22] **Pascal Mathis:** They had money in the bank. And then my co-founders, they did a bold move. They said, we don't want to lay off people. We tried to keep the group together and they did something very smart. They went to the attractions, which are sometimes hard to get. And so we got very good contracts. with attractions, which usually don't need to sign these kinds of contracts, became very strong out of the crisis, stronger than all of our competitors.

[00:07:48] **Susan Kish:** Got it. And you left, if I recall correctly.

[00:07:52] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah, exactly. At the end of 2013, I left. That had very personal reasons. We had two kids by the time.

[00:08:00] **Susan Kish:** Congrats!

[00:08:01] **Pascal Mathis:** And since we, since, yeah, thanks to my wife. Yeah. I'm sure you had a role to play. Yeah. Yeah. I, at least this is how I tell the story. Yeah. No, we had already offices in Germany and the US. So I needed to travel quite a lot and my wife said, Hey, this is not how a proper father should behave. And yeah, that's why I stepped down from the board and from my operational roles.

[00:08:26] **Susan Kish:** And you worked at Google for a few years.

[00:08:28] **Pascal Mathis:** That's correct and also there, it's interesting sometimes in life, I really had no clue what to do because you're an entrepreneur, you have your own company. It's really nice to work for yourself. And having your project and a friend of mine just sent my CV to Google without even telling me. So only later he said, ah, by the way, I put your CV to Google and I was interested anyhow to learn how they recruit because this was mostly my job at Get Your Guide.

And yep, that's why I started the process. Somehow I convinced them to hire me.

[00:09:00] **Susan Kish:** But that entrepreneurial bug just stayed in place or you got frustrated with how hard it is to start up something in Switzerland or what was a catalyst for you to leave and start Wingman?

[00:09:12] **Pascal Mathis:** So at Google, it was fantastic to be, again, nice carpets, big windows, a lot of light, great perks.

So it was, it's really nice to work for Google.

[00:09:23] **Susan Kish:** And the dining rooms were as wonderful as you hear?

[00:09:26] **Pascal Mathis:** It's insane. They even served us sushi sometimes. It's really, it's incredible. So it's really, it's a great company. And it was also interesting for me to learn something new. What happened then is that the young people who wanted to become an entrepreneur, they reached out to me and asked for advice.

And it, yeah,

[00:09:45] **Susan Kish:** Through the ETH network or just you had been profiled enough or

[00:09:49] **Pascal Mathis:** Mostly, I think mostly through friends and yeah, a lot of ETH people and they asked me questions how we did this at Get Your Guide, how you build a unicorn, et cetera, et cetera. And obviously it's also a bit charming because you know something which not so many people in Switzerland have gone through and I started coaching and then I realized.

That there is all this talent, especially from ETH and nobody cares. There was a bank here, ZKB, and they had a program to invest a bit of money. This is also how we started at Get Your Guide, which is great, but this is not even for profit. I have the feeling that's how I started to then also invest small amounts into these companies.

[00:10:30] **Susan Kish:** So, you started as an angel yourself?

[00:10:33] **Pascal Mathis:** That's exactly correct. Yep. So this was not planned. Yep.

[00:10:37] **Susan Kish:** You just rolled into it. It does happen. And then you decided to make this more formal or what switched from an interesting job at Google with great sushi and other gazillion perks to the offices of Wingman with that W in the background.

[00:10:54] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. It was. Yeah.

[00:10:56] **Susan Kish:** Great branding, by the way. I love that W. I love that font.

[00:11:00] **Pascal Mathis:** We are very proud of it, especially with the dot, which you see somewhere here. Yeah. No, it's again, accidentally. So I did this as a sidekick in the evenings again, you can see a bit, I just, yeah, I never want to be bored. And so I always see opportunities.

[00:11:18] **Susan Kish:** Sidehustle. That's the term.

[00:11:20] **Pascal Mathis:** Sidehustle! And then it always starts with a friend. So I'm not so good just by myself, but my friend Lukas, who also started the great business called eat.ch, where many people order food still until today. And he already sold his

company and had also a bit of money and the entrepreneurial background. So the two of us would start to invite founders and listen to their pitches and help them.

And in the best teams, we then started to invest. And so we were already professionalizing a little bit. So we were this business angel duo. Yeah. And we would already create the brand. So the wingman brand we already established and yeah, this is how we did the first few years. Just as the, as these two business angels and trying to find fun deals. And yeah, having fun with these young entrepreneurs.

[00:12:08] **Susan Kish:** And then you decided that was lovely and you'd go and actually raise a fund and professionalize it. 80 million or something like that. That was a lot.

[00:12:16] **Pascal Mathis:** We actually figured out that it's not so lovely because we had not enough money to do the entire rounds. So what this means to the founders, as soon as they had the money from Lukas and me, the show would go on, they would have to fundraise. And then I would call all my friends, Lukas would call all his friends. It takes four or five, six months until we had the round together. It was so cumbersome. And then Lukas and myself would then be in the board and close to the founders and coach them.

And all the others would just ride along with us and then maybe even do a stupid joke at the general assembly if something wouldn't work out. And we said, Hey, we have to switch this around. So first all these wealthy people, they should invest in our bucket, which is called the fund. And from this fund, according to strategy, we can then do the entire rounds really quickly for the entrepreneurs.

And yeah, it makes just more sense to make this professional.

[00:13:13] **Susan Kish:** However, you're just doing this in Switzerland for just for Swiss entrepreneurs?

[00:13:18] **Pascal Mathis:** That's correct. And there is a third partner, which whom is an important addition. So Lukas and myself, we are the entrepreneurs. We have done it ourselves. And then Alex comes in, who has worked for a fund already four years here in Switzerland. And we had a very similar thinking about how a proper VC should work or a new VC and not this old fashioned top down models, but really more American on eye level, supporting the founders, coach them. The three of us then founded this fund structure.

[00:13:49] **Susan Kish:** Got it. Why did you start an incubator, why didn't you do the Y Combinator route?

[00:13:54] **Pascal Mathis:** This has been a discussion, but I personally and my partners share this, we like to invest in teams. To date we do not invest in single because it's just so hard to build a company from the ground up. And in these

incubators, what they often do is they try to help form the teams. And sometimes they even give them an idea.

This is not what we believe in. It's just like a religion. So our religion is we want the teams to build the team and also have the idea because this way, if times go not so well, and this is 100 percent always the case that teams don't break up. We have the feeling that the teams are more stable if they found each other and if they come up with their own thing.

[00:14:38] **Susan Kish:** That's interesting. So they have the trust when they enter that relationship because you're right. When money starts to be on the table, weird things happen.

[00:14:46] **Pascal Mathis:** That's absolutely correct.

[00:14:49] **Susan Kish:** Traditionally. Investors would say, if you focused on just one country, your risk profile is going to be unacceptably high. So how were you able to persuade your passive investors, your LPs, that this was going to be an acceptable risk profile?

[00:15:06] **Pascal Mathis:** So our investors are very wealthy people and they pick not one fund, but several. So you're absolutely right. If we only pick one geography, in our case, Switzerland, this is not diverse, not too diverse. But on the other hand, in this earliest stage, so we invest in the very first round of fundraise. So in this stage, you usually want to be close to the founders. And also in Silicon Valley, you find these pre-seed funds, which really invest just in a radius of two hours travel time to be close to the founders.

And we knew that this is our stage. This is where we can add most value. So we knew that we had to choose a location. And we were just pure lucky that Switzerland has to offer these great, especially the technical universities. It's for us, it's a, it's the perfect starting point.

[00:15:57] **Susan Kish:** How do angels react and work with you?

[00:16:00] **Pascal Mathis:** So as you have heard a bit from our founding story, we are playing in this very first round. In earlier times, this was reserved for the angels. And yes, some of them we might push out of these rounds and they are not able to invest. We always look for people who can help with their network or their skillset. So we will make the lead in the round always. And then we will reserve a few hundred thousands for angels who really add value to the table.

[00:16:29] **Susan Kish:** A friend of mine was a very active Swiss angel and lives in Hong Kong now. And he always said that as soon as you make an angel investment, you should just write it off.

Don't worry about it. Do what you can to help them. Do what you can to help build it. Use your network, do whatever, but don't live or die by your angel investing.

[00:16:51] **Pascal Mathis:** It's a very good advice and I did not follow. And especially for entrepreneurs who turned investors, it's a, it's tough in the beginning. My first few investments I wanted to get, I did not want it to, but somehow I'm a hands on guy. Yeah. And I wanted to almost get involved operationally. Which is a big mistake. As an investor, you sit on the backseat of the car and you try to scream sometimes more to the left, more to the right, but this is the only thing you can do and avoid road roadblocks. It's exactly. Yeah.

[00:17:21] **Susan Kish:** So you're a backseat driver, but there's an art to it. Is that what you're saying?

[00:17:26] **Pascal Mathis:** I like how you phrase it. We should use it. Yeah.

[00:17:29] **Susan Kish:** The world's best backseat driver. That sounds great. You work in the pre-seed area. But that's a pretty technical term. Can you give a sort of an idiot's guide to pre-seed or angel investing? What are the things they should be thinking about?

[00:17:44] **Pascal Mathis:** Yes. Happy to do so. The finance people are very simply in that way. So they have these different fundraising rounds and until you sell a company or IPO it, there is maybe six, seven of them and we just use the alphabet. So A, B, C, but then they figured out, Hey, in the very beginning. They also need a name and it's just pre seed for the very first round where you maybe take in up to a million US dollar.

[00:18:12] **Susan Kish:** Is that what they used to call friends and family?

[00:18:14] **Pascal Mathis:** Friends and family is maybe. This is the three F friends, family, and fools. So this is really just in the 10, 000. And then the pre- seed, the replay is the hundred thousands and then a seed round will be in the millions ideally.

[00:18:27] **Susan Kish:** Oh, that's interesting. Okay. Good. And let's say somebody wanted to be an investor in that stage. What are the things they should be considering?

[00:18:36] **Pascal Mathis:** My first advice would be not to do direct investments, but start with a fund investment because then you see a bit how the professionals do it, how they construct a portfolio. And I think portfolio is the most important word.

If you invest in three companies, most likely all of them go bust and you lose all your money. Which would be a shame. You have to... it's a numbers game. You need to invest in at least 10, 20, 30 companies to make sure for the risk you take that certain of these become winners in their category.

[00:19:07] **Susan Kish:** What's the minimum amount an active investor at that stage could? be thinking of because all of a sudden it sounds like it's a million bucks before you should be really thinking about this stuff.

[00:19:17] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. You can start early. There is also this network like angel list, et cetera. There you can start with 5, 000, but I would follow a bit the professionals also.

This is also a good idea instead of investing in a fund.

[00:19:30] **Susan Kish:** You're not just talking in your book, are you, Pascal?

[00:19:33] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. That was the trap. Yep. Now, if you follow the professionals and invest tiny bits and build your little portfolio, I think then you're on a good start.

[00:19:45] **Susan Kish:** Okay, so now let's flip roles. Let's say I am, uh, a brilliant material science engineer and I have a fabulous idea to address the issue around plastics, right?

Next generation plastics. And I've heard of this guy, Pascal, and I see his LinkedIn, it tells me I'm really too busy. I can't possibly respond directly. You have to send your information here. And I go, okay, how do I prep? What do I do? What are the things I should be thinking of before I come to see you?

[00:20:15] **Pascal Mathis:** The youngsters they start to train and we can feel this. The pitches are better and more professional, but we need you to be able to, is you explain your technology, your new plastic in the most easy way possible. So if we cannot understand after an interrogation of half an hour, then we will not invest because then we don't believe that you convince customers or other investors.

[00:20:38] **Susan Kish:** That's a good test.

[00:20:39] **Pascal Mathis:** Of your new plastic. So being able to frame your technology and then also maybe the business model in very easy language.

[00:20:47] **Susan Kish:** Okay. So that's one. What's number two?

[00:20:49] **Pascal Mathis:** Then the most important thing is bring a co-founder. If you are by yourself, we will not invest because it's just so tough to build a company from scratch, we believe it needs at least two people to start this off.

[00:21:03] **Susan Kish:** And what if I'm terrified that you're going to steal my idea and I want you to sign an NDA before I even walk in the door? How do you deal with that?

[00:21:11] **Pascal Mathis:** This happens maybe in one percent of all cases and we look at thousand deals every year. I was in this exact same role when we were at Get Your Guide. I was like, This idea is easy to copy. Why should I tell anybody? It's so great. Everybody will do this. Yeah. If you would see my calendar, you would not be afraid because it's so full with a hell lot of stuff you don't want to imagine. And for a reason I decided to be on the investor side. And not on the entrepreneurial side anymore. So I'm the last one who would steal an idea and do an next startup. I have done this and I'm very happy on the investor side of things.

[00:21:48] **Susan Kish:** You get to go home, not at five o'clock, but maybe at six o'clock. Is that what you're trying to say?

[00:21:54] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. With a family at home, I try six, but I guess after the dinner I will start up my computer again and do some more emailing.

[00:22:01] **Susan Kish:** I understand. So you don't have another side hustle you're doing right now?

[00:22:04] **Pascal Mathis:** At the moment, it's not possible. I do a lot of sports, but a side hustle with the fund, it's, I don't know if it's possible.

[00:22:10] **Susan Kish:** I just read a article on Forbes about Switzerland as the next Silicon Valley with some great stats from IFJ around the number of startups and how much money was being invested and all the outside Westcoast and London investors who are starting to be active there. Do you think that's really possible? What are the ingredients that make you believe that Switzerland and Zurich could be the next Silicon Valley as posited in that article?

[00:22:39] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah, it's great that we are in the ETH podcast because I think ETH and EPFL are for me the main two ingredients. It's incredible the kind of talent we are able as a country to attract. So the professors who come here and they bring all these students.

[00:22:56] **Susan Kish:** That's right. They bring your whole labs, right?

[00:22:58] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. And so this is the most important that you have these crazy smart people.

And then what Switzerland is maybe missing a little bit this ambition, but since we import so many people from all around the world, we often see international teams. So there is somebody coming from the US or from wherever teaming up with some Swiss and German and then they have a quite good and diverse team to start.

So I think talent makes me a strong believer that we can be. The Silicon Valley and then also the rest of the country. It's just so stable. There is a lot of industry players. There is the Googles and the Metas, they're all here. Google employs 5,000 people in Zurich.

[00:23:37] **Susan Kish:** And a bunch of other guys have labs here too. Disney, Microsoft, almost...

[00:23:42] **Pascal Mathis:** And IBM since 40 years or something.

[00:23:44] **Susan Kish:** That's right. And they won Nobel prizes outta that lab, right?

[00:23:47] **Pascal Mathis:** So I think on the talent side and industry for first customers we have everything here. It's somehow just, we call it the flywheel. We have the feeling if there is a couple of more Get Your Guides, some companies which become big and maybe even stay here and don't move outside the country, then the flywheel should start to spin because these founders, they invest again in, in other companies. And these, the first employees who live through this journey, they come out of these companies and start their own stuff again. And we really have the feeling there is not much more needed and the flywheel can start to spin.

[00:24:23] **Susan Kish:** ETH is a theme throughout our conversation, right? Whether it's going there or doing the ETH juniors and becoming president within what two months or continuing to work with them. How did ETH and those years and that experience, how did that prepare you for what you're doing now?

[00:24:42] **Pascal Mathis:** This is now an interesting question. So that my pure electrical engineering studying, this gave me a logical thinking, which I use every day. And sometimes for me, it's almost impossible that other people cannot make the connection if something is dependent on each other or not. So I see that even smart people. They sometimes mix stuff which does not belong together. Just this very clear, logical thinking. I think I acquired or trained at ETH and I'm grateful for this. I'm known to always find a solution which is simple, although the problem might be complex. And I think this is what we get trained in at ETH.

[00:25:27] **Susan Kish:** You can make an argument that is the skill of a great engineer.

[00:25:31] **Pascal Mathis:** Yes.

[00:25:32] **Susan Kish:** So there are many institutions that create wonderful, extremely insightful engineers, right? What makes ETH special? Why is that where you are? And what was the magic at ETH that sort of set you on this path.

[00:25:49] **Pascal Mathis:** I think what I like about ETH is that there is enough money in the institution. So I'm very grateful. And I think many people at ETH are. And the laboratories which they give us just for free. And also now all these student project houses and these kinds of initiatives. It's so great. So money is not an issue. And then this melting pot that you put all these great talent together from different nationalities and also different fields nowadays, I think this is something ETH improved. We were always a bit, only the electrical engineers, nowadays they bring the departments together. I think this melting pot makes it an incredible place.

[00:26:30] **Susan Kish:** Fantastic. Pascal, that was a wonderful conversation. I have a few closing questions if that's okay.

[00:26:37] **Pascal Mathis:** I'm ready.

[00:26:39] **Susan Kish:** Okay. So when you were very young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

[00:26:44] **Pascal Mathis:** Yeah. Now I don't know how this figure is called in English, but from the Donald Duck series, there was this inventor. And I always wanted to be him just to create stuff out of nothing. This was my dream.

[00:26:56] **Susan Kish:** Sounds like you accomplished that dream or you're on that path. Let me say. You help others create.

[00:27:02] **Pascal Mathis:** Exactly. Exactly. I'm not the guy, but at least I can be instrumental for these kinds of people to achieve their goals.

[00:27:09] **Susan Kish:** That's lovely. And what are you curious about today? What inspires you today in terms of either technologies or other areas or what captures your interest?

[00:27:21] **Pascal Mathis:** So for me, it's a combination between people, these entrepreneurs and technology. And that's why I have a dream job. Every day I am able to sit with these great talent and they come up with some crazy ideas. Yeah. Sometimes it's too crazy. But some of them will change the world. And I can play my little role in, in the inception of these companies. For me, it's a, it's heaven.

[00:27:48] **Susan Kish:** What are the books that you're reading right now or podcasts that you're listening to?

[00:27:52] **Pascal Mathis:** Since we are fundraising for our fund, I'm reading the BILANZ with all the rich people and I'm on a many tech blocks. So I'm, internally I'm called the gadget master. I always have to check out the newest cameras and the newest phones et cetera.

[00:28:07] **Susan Kish:** This same angel investor always told me that he'd looked at these unbelievably expensive knowledge management systems and data management system. And he said, I could do that, or I could take a bunch of people out to lunch.

[00:28:19] **Pascal Mathis:** This is even how I invest. Obviously we do our due diligence, we look at the technology, we look at the market size, but after all I consider myself just good with people. I try to figure out, can these people and persons run a business and stick together and be ambitious enough.

[00:28:37] **Susan Kish:** So when you take them out to lunch, what's your favorite place in Zurich?

[00:28:40] **Pascal Mathis:** My favorite place is for sure Italian and I like very close to the main station PIU, it's just next to it.

[00:28:47] **Susan Kish:** And any favorite places at the ETH? You mentioned the Mensa.

[00:28:51] **Pascal Mathis:** It has to be the Dozentenfoyer. So in our times, it was still hard to get to sneak in there and nowadays it has become a bit easier.

But whenever I get invited to the Dozentenfoyer, I'm always accepting. I like the view over the city. And especially when it's, when the sun sets, it's so nice.

[00:29:08] **Susan Kish:** It is nice. And you can sit outside. It's great. Pascal, thank you so much. Really appreciate your time and your energy and good luck in making Zurich that Silicon Valley.

[00:29:20] **Pascal Mathis:** Thank you Susan. It was a pleasure. Thanks for the questions.

[00:29:26] **Susan Kish:** I'm Susan Kisch, host of the We Are ETH series, telling the story of the alumni and friends of the ETH Zurich, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. ETH regularly ranks amongst the top universities in the world with cutting edge research.

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