

Press Release

TU9 demands €500 million for Digital Pact for Higher Education Teaching

Berlin, July 16, 2020

The Presidents and Rectors of Germany's leading Universities of Technology (TU9) call for a national digital pact for higher education teaching. A first proposal put forward by the 16 State Ministers of Science called for €500 million in funding. The TU9 Alliance supports that call.

The TU9 Universities want to use the experience gained in the summer semester 2020 shaped by the impact of the Corona pandemic as an opportunity to change teaching and learning. We need to consolidate the positive experience gained with online teaching and find the right mix of online and on-campus teaching.

Each format should develop its strengths. Used in combination, they will give us significantly more scope for interaction, projects and discourse. More than ever, as the place in which we learn, teach, research and organize, the university will become the central place for diverse and vibrant forms of encounter.

In order to prevent every university from having to divert its scarce resources from other fields of development, we are calling for a national "Digital Pact for Higher Education Teaching", as formulated by the 16 State Ministers of Science. The pact has yet to be put in place. That is a mistake and one that must be corrected.

That correction should take in sustained investment in spatial and technical infrastructure. We need innovative places of encounter to accommodate new teaching and learning formats, attractive further training, codes of conduct for digital interaction with one another and a strong university didactics. We need adapted mobility concepts and new ideas to enable easy access to courses offered by other universities. With the combination of on-campus teaching and complementary online teaching, both students and lecturers would gain new freedoms that enable them to organize their studies and teaching more flexibly.

There is a strong alliance of proponents of traditional, comprehensive face-to-face teaching. TU9 aims not to replace one with the other, but to complement and enhance classroom teaching. We thus require state funding to expand universities as forward-looking educational institutions with a modern digital infrastructure, adapted spatial models to accommodate new teaching formats, a modern higher education teaching approach and an innovative enrollment system that enables students to study at different locations.

Policymakers must act now. A first proposal for a digital pact called for the Federal Government to allocate €500 million in funding. We support that call!

Guest article in: DIE ZEIT, Issue 30/2020 dated July 16, 2020.

Online at: <https://www.zeit.de/2020/30/digitalisierung-hochschulen-foerderung-digitalpakt>



About TU9

TU9 is the Alliance of leading Universities of Technology in Germany: RWTH Aachen University, Technische Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Braunschweig, Technical University of Darmstadt, Technische Universität Dresden, Leibniz University Hannover, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Technical University of Munich, and University of Stuttgart.

Tradition, excellence, and innovation are the hallmarks of TU9 Universities. Founded during the Industrial Age, they contributed decisively to technological progress back then and continue to do so today. They enjoy an outstanding reputation around the world as renowned research and teaching institutions that promote the transfer of knowledge and technology between universities and practice. As such, they train exceptional young academics for careers in science, business, and administration and assume social responsibility. TU9 Universities foster top-class international networks and diverse cooperation with industry, making them a key element of Germany's position as a location of science and innovation.