

PRESS RELEASE

GERMAN U15 and TU9 – German Universities of Technology

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Leading German universities warn of quality loss in doctoral studies

The two alliances of leading universities in Germany, German U15 and TU9 – German Universities of Technology, are highly concerned about the introduction of a right for Germany’s Fachhochschulen (Universities of Applied Sciences, UAS) to award doctorates, as currently proposed by the governing coalition in North Rhine-Westphalia. They warn of a fragmentation of the higher education system. Those affected worst would be the institutions’ prospective doctoral candidates themselves.

Germany’s Universities of Applied Sciences have not previously been allowed to confer doctoral degrees, and the U15 and TU9 Universities have long worked closely with them to give their graduates the opportunity to obtain a full academic doctorate. Increasing numbers of UAS graduates make use of these collaborations. U15 and TU9 strongly advocate that this approach be retained.

Professor Georg Krausch, President of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Deputy Chairman of German U15: “University doctorates are a hallmark of the German science system. They enjoy the highest reputation worldwide and open up the best prospects for careers in science and research and development. These advantages must also be maintained for the many talented UAS graduates. For this purpose, we have created well-functioning cooperation systems together with our partners at those institutions. The ability for them to confer doctorates independently would merely lead to expensive duplicate structures.”

Professor Wolfram Ressel, Rector of the University of Stuttgart and TU9 President: “We already advocated further improvements to doctoral pathways for particularly talented UAS graduates in a TU9 Position Paper back in 2014. To make optimum use of the available potential, the way must remain open for the best graduates to obtain their doctorates at a university. There, they have access to ideal research conditions in surroundings that support them in their independent and original research while ensuring their integration in the scientific community. Particularly extensive use of this possibility is made in the engineering sciences. We need to continue this established collaborative approach.

About German U15

U15 is the strategic interest group for strong research universities with international visibility. Free University Berlin, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University Bonn, Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Albert Ludwigs University Freiburg, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, University of Hamburg, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Georg August University Göttingen, Ruprecht Karls University Heidelberg, University of Cologne, Westfalian Wilhelms University Münster, Julius Maximilians University Würzburg, University of Leipzig, Humboldt University of Berlin, Ludwig Maximilians University Munich.

About TU9 – German Universities of Technology

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.

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