

German-Japanese University Consortium HeKKSaGOn is holding its seventh Presidents' Conference: Expansion of transnational cooperation

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 <http://www.hekksagon.net>

The rectors and presidents of the six participating institutions will gather at Ruperto Carola on 12 and 13 September 2019. Accompanying the university heads will be numerous researchers, representatives of the respective administrations, and students to share their progress on the current cooperation projects and to discuss the collaboration's future plans. Approximately 220 participants are expected to attend the event.

Members of the university alliance founded in 2010 include Heidelberg University, the University of Göttingen, and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology along with three of Japan's leading institutions, the universities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Tohoku. The consortium, to date a singular cooperation for the two countries, aims to intensify collaboration in research and teaching. To that end, the partners in Germany and Japan develop joint research projects, initiate transnational study and doctoral programmes, and promote the exchange of researchers, PhD candidates, and students, including in summer and winter schools. Working groups within the HeKKSaGOn alliance have been established in various forward-looking fields of research, such as the environmental and material sciences, the neuro- and life sciences, scientific computing, as well as the social and cultural sciences. The universities of Kyoto and Heidelberg have each opened an office on the partner university's campus. These offices act, among other things, as "communication bridges" for the HeKKSaGOn alliance.

The upcoming presidents' conference, entitled "The Future of the HeKKSaGOn Alliance: Priorities, Challenges, Opportunities", will begin with an overview of current developments at the six participating universities. Results from ongoing cooperation projects will be presented in various working groups and approaches for future cooperation discussed. Within the framework of the university alliance, researchers are currently working on topics such as data science, regenerative energies, robotics, catalysis, nanotechnology, and transcultural studies. During the meeting in Heidelberg, the HeKKSaGOn partners will also address the strategic direction of the alliance and confer on the primary areas of future research collaborations – with a view towards the United Nations' stated goals for sustainable development. How the German-Japanese university alliance can contribute to those goals will also be a topic of a student workshop. To conclude the conference, the presidents and rectors will sign a joint declaration on the future development of the cooperation in the HeKKSaGOn alliance.

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