

New European university alliances funded: 20 German universities participating

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On 9th July the European Commission announced the winners of the second pilot round of "European universities". 20 German universities are involved in 18 of the 24 funded European University Alliances.

The President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Prof Dr Peter-André Alt, has made the following comments in Berlin regarding the announcement of the further 24 European university alliances funded by the EU:

"All universities participating in the selected European networks are to be congratulated. With 20 universities participating in 18 of the selected alliances, Germany's presence is even more gratifying than in the first round. A total of 15 German universities were involved in 14 of the 17 networks in that round. This is an impressive achievement. German universities are assuming responsibility for European development; they are synonymous with networking, international cooperation and open-mindedness. It is consequential that they are now actively shaping the fundamental idea underlying the European university alliances within the framework of the different concepts of the individual networks.

The alliances have the challenging task of developing lasting appeal by creating a vibrant, authentic community in Europe. They are needed in all their complexity as places of study, teaching and research. This unique quality of universities can thus continue to develop in Europe and become more apparent.

Now it is important to carefully observe the development of the university alliances. We want to make a success out of them for the sake of Europe's scientific and social development. The funded projects face huge challenges; they need time to develop, experiment and adjust. We are still at the very start of the process of creating genuine European universities. Although the concepts are encouraging, it will be essential for the European Union to continue to increase its investments in the networks and to provide sustained support for them as they develop. They can succeed if the EU and, on the German side, the federal and state governments constructively organise the process together with the universities."

In the future, the European university networks will also receive 2 million Euro over a three-year period to strengthen joint research from Horizon 2020, in addition to the 5 million Euro from Erasmus+. In total, the first 41 networks with 280 participating universities will receive 287 million Euro for three years. Their strategies entail the development of joint study programmes, supporting the mobility of researchers and students and establishing structures for joint research. The German Academic Exchange Service is providing additional funding to German universities as part of the initiative. A total of 62 networks submitted applications in the second round.

Source: German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

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[Back](#)
