



UK Science
& Innovation
Network

Science and Innovation developments in Germany – March 2015

German agency announces €1 million funding for Research Hub in Cambridge

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) announced on 28 March it will provide €1m over five years to create a research hub for German studies at the University of Cambridge. The hub will not only build on research into German issues already underway at Cambridge; it is designed to create a public platform for the UK where German themes can be explored. The hub will start operations in January 2016. The funding will, amongst others, support workshops and collaborations between Cambridge and German universities, debates between significant British and German public figures and a major annual conference.

New programme for young researchers

Research Minister Johanna Wanka this month announced a new programme for young researchers that should make a career in research more attractive. The details of the programme still remain vague, but the idea is to create additional tenure track positions so that young researchers have the promise of a permanent position, usually as a professor.

New German Hightech Forum

The new German Hightech Forum started its work in March 2015. Its main role is to support the new high-tech strategy of the Federal Government until the end of the legislature in 2017. It also plays an advisory role. The chairs of the Hightech Forum are Andreas Barner, President of the Donors ' Association for German Science (Stifterverband), and Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft. The forum held its inaugural meeting in Berlin. Its central advisory body includes 20 experts in the field of business, science and society. Together with policy experts, they develop concrete recommendations for the implementation of the high-tech strategy, discuss the latest developments in innovation policy and formulate new research tasks and develop future scenarios.

New industry-focused research organisation

Several industry-focused research institutes across Germany have joined forces to form the Zuse Foundation, named after the German computer pioneer Konrad Zuse. The institutes want to focus on providing a flexible research service for Germany's

SMEs, leveraging money from government funds for supporting innovation in industry.

Implementation of Industry 4.0

Cebit, Germany largest ICT trade fair, provided the backdrop for a new attempt to kick start “Industry 4.0”, Germany’s answer to the Internet of Things. The Federal research and economics ministers Johanna Wanka and Sigmar Gabriel demonstrated unity, making a joint announcement of a new platform that will be tasked with implementing “Industry 4.0”, with a slightly broader membership than the previous platform. In addition to this, the German ministry for Research and Education (BMBF) is initiating a consortium, consisting of industry and Fraunhofer institutes, which hopes to drive the innovation necessary for the implementation of Industry 4.0. One of the main tasks is to create an “Industrial Data Space”, a secure area of data for industry, possibly building on the existing internet, but protected from it. The German manufacturing industry wants to move swiftly to set standards that comply with German industry needs.

€180m government investment in cyber research

The German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) this month announced that it would invest €180m in cyber security research projects up to 2020. The research ministry has set up expertise centres for cyber security in Saarbrücken, Karlsruhe and Darmstadt. Research minister Wanka said that the research should help individual users and some of the money can flow into programmes that help to improve public awareness of cyber security.