Renowned DAAD programme “Strategic partnerships” has officially started

Ulm University intensifies collaboration with universities in Egypt, China and Russia

The DAAD programme “Strategic partnerships” was officially started with the international kick-off-meeting, which took place on Wednesday 17th July at Ulm University. The internationalization programme, which is funded with 850,000 Euros by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, aims to place the longer term collaboration with renowned universities in Moscow, Cairo, Nanjing and Jinan on a stronger institutionalized basis.

Thus the president of the university, Professor Karl Joachim Ebeling, could welcome a good dozen of high-ranking representatives of Moscow State University (Lomonosov University), Cairo University, Southeast University and Shandong University in the senate hall of Ulm University. The highly official meeting took place in an exceptionally familiar atmosphere because most of the present foreign representatives of university know the university already from former visits, and for two Chinese members of the delegation, Naifeng Liu and Zilin Sun, Ulm University was their former place of study.

Exchange programmes for students, PhD students and lecturers

The partner-like relationships between the four countries comprise both student education, further education of PhD students and research exchange between experienced scientists. “Besides international summer schools and seminar, more joint courses of study and double degrees as well as the offer of sandwich PhD studies are being planned”, Professor Ulrich Stadtmüller, Vice President of Teaching and International Affairs of Ulm University explained. Especially in the research areas civilization diseases, molecular medicine, energy related materials and energy transformation, the collaboration is to be intensified. These areas of research are especially important for the profile building and the international visibility of Ulm university, as these areas are already successful focuses of research.

After the president and the vice presidents Professor Ulrich Stadtmüller (Vice president of Teaching and International Affairs) and Professor Klaus Michael Debatin (Vice president of Medicine) had informed the foreign guests on the research focuses, the performance
characteristics and the specialties of Ulm University, the representatives of the partner universities gave detailed information on their own expectations concerning the strengthened international cooperation. Further parts of the agenda: as a sign of close bonds and good partnerships, there was a champagne reception besides the group photo.

**Global educational mandate, which is committed to the common good**

“In a partnership relationship both parties profit”, Professor Ebeling stressed, “On the one hand, it helps with recruiting good students and PhD students, on the other hand, it offers the opportunity to all participants to gain international experience in the time of increasing globalization.” The programme is titled “Serving the community – educating the global world”, thus it has an educational mandate, which regards itself as committed to worldwide common good. The continuation of the programme is four years on the whole (2013 to 2014). The German part of funding is funded reciprocally in respective parts by the foreign partners, so that the amount of funding is many times higher than the funding sum of the Ministry of Education and Research.

The programme is significantly important for the strategic reorientation of the international relationships at Ulm University. “Because by the integration of the top management of Ulm University, faculties and institutes, we succeed much better in creating a functioning infrastructure for continuing exchange and cooperation programmes”, explained Dr Reinhold Lücker, director of the International Office of Ulm University. Research outcomes and teaching offers are to be strengthened in the same way.

**Personal contacts form the basis for intensive relationships**

“But of course we do not want to exclude individual initiatives of committed scientists. Because in the end, of course, it are the personal contacts and initiatives, which have created the basis for this intensive partnership”, Professor Ebeling explains. For instance the special commitment of the Russian nano and polymer researcher professor Alexei Khoklov, who initiated numerous scientific collaboration projects between Ulm University and Moscow State University (Lomonosov University), and had even been rewarded for his commitment with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The delegations from Egypt, China and Russia will have enough time to look around in Ulm and the surroundings. Besides excursions to town and to the castle Reisensburg, the research centre of Ulm University, also a visit to Meersburg and Friedrichshafen at the lake Constance are included in the programme.

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