
FORSCHUNGSCAMPUS MITTELHESSEN
RESEARCH CAMPUS OF CENTRAL HESSEN

Cooperation Agreement

between

Justus Liebig University Giessen,

Philipps-Universität Marburg

and

Technischen Hochschule Mittelhessen

(University of Applied Sciences)

for the foundation of the

Forschungscampus Mittelhessen

(Research Campus of Central Hessen)

Justus Liebig University Giessen, Philipps-Universität Marburg and Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences) conclude the following agreement to found the Forschungscampus Mittelhessen (Research Campus of Central Hessen) pursuant to § 5 of the Framework Agreement on Cooperation between Justus Liebig University Giessen, Philipps-Universität Marburg and Fachhochschule Giessen Friedberg (University of Applied Sciences Giessen Friedberg) of 09 February 2011 (Mittelhessenvertrag, Central Hessen Contract) and § 47 Sentence 2 of the Hessisches Hochschulgesetz (Hessian Higher Education Act) of 14 December 2009 (GVBl. I page 666) in the version of 30 November 2015 (GVBl. I page 510).

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Preamble

The three Central Hessian universities, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Philipps-Universität Marburg and Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences), are founding Research Campus of Central Hessen in order to implement innovative concepts and to create future-oriented structures.

Central Hessen has been shaped to a large extent over the centuries by an academic landscape of international standing. Alongside the comprehensive universities of Marburg and Giessen, both characterised by a history of over 400 years and to some extent unique profiles, the region is home to Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences), one of the largest technical universities in Germany with an excellent engineering profile.

A particular feature of the Central Hessian academic landscape is the traditionally high degree of cooperation between the three institutions. The founding of Forschungscampus Mittelhessen (Research Campus of Central Hessen) by means of the present trilateral agreement testifies to the continuation and reinforcement of cooperation and networking in Central Hessen.

The Research Campus is designed to be a long-term strategic alliance of the Central Hessian universities and their partners. The goal of the Research Campus is to boost regional networking particularly in research and supporting early-career researchers, to create future-oriented structures to encourage top research and to set up a Cooperative Doctoral Platform. Research Campus of Central Hessen thus offers a valuable structural and strategic benefit to all participating partners, the region, the State of Hessen and top research in Germany.

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I. Governance Structure

§ 1 Structure of the Research Campus

(1) The purpose of the Research Campus is to promote joint activities in research, the qualification of early-career researchers and the research infrastructure of the three Central Hessian universities.

(2) The following bodies and committees shall be formed at the Research Campus of Central Hessen:

- a) the Board of Directors (Direktorium)
- b) the Management Office (Geschäftsstelle)
- c) the Research Council (Forschungsrat)
- d) the International Advisory Board (Internationaler Beirat)
- e) the Steering Committee (Steuerungsgruppe), if implemented by the Board of Directors

(3) The Research Campus shall give itself procedural rules (Geschäftsordnung), which shall be ratified by the Board of Directors.

§ 2 Board of Directors

(1) The Presidents of the participating universities shall belong to the Board of Directors.

(2) The Board of Directors shall head the Research Campus and decide on the funding allocated to the Research Campus. The Management Office shall be assigned to the Board of Directors.

(3) The Board of Directors shall be chaired in turn by one of its members for one year each, starting with the President of Justus Liebig University Giessen. The chairperson shall represent the Research Campus within and outside of the participating universities. In urgent cases which cannot be delayed, the chairperson shall assume immediate responsibility.

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(4) The Board of Directors may entrust a Steering Committee with exercising the operative leadership function. The members of the Steering Committee shall be the Vice Presidents responsible for research at the participating universities.

§ 3 Management Office

(1) The Research Campus shall have an Management Office which shall be headed by the Manager. The Management Office shall be located at Justus Liebig University.

(2) The Manager shall support the Board of Directors and the Steering Committee. She or he shall conduct the current business of the Research Campus in accordance with the decisions made by the Board of Directors.

§ 4 Research Council

(1) The Research Council shall consist of the Vice-Presidents responsible for research and, as scientific members, four scientists from each of the participating universities, and, as an advisory member, a representative of the Hessen State Ministry for Higher Education, Research and the Arts (Hessisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst).

(2) The scientific members shall be appointed by the Executive Boards of the participating universities. Their term of office shall be three years; re-appointment is possible.

(3) The Research Council shall be chaired in turn by one of the Vice Presidents belonging to the Research Council for one year each, starting with the Vice President responsible for research at Philipps-Universität Marburg.

(4) The Research Council shall be convened at least once a year. It shall support and advise the Board of Directors and shall have the following duties in particular:

- a) Support for the participating universities in the strategic development of joint thematic fields in research, promotion of early-career researchers, and scientific infrastructure
- b) Identification of focal areas for research and for promotion of early-career researchers in future research fields
- c) Proposals regarding the fields in which coordinated planning for professorial appointments are to be developed or further developed

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- d) Proposals for applying for funding from Research Campus of Central Hessen
- e) Recommendation for the granting of funds from Research Campus of Central Hessen

§ 5 International Advisory Board

(1) The International Advisory Board shall be comprised of eight internationally recognised persons from science and politics. Two members shall be appointed respectively by each participating university and two members shall be appointed jointly by all the participating universities.

(2) The International Advisory Board shall convene every two years. Its duties shall be:

- a) Advice and support for the development of the Research Campus
- b) Intensification of the visibility of the Research Campus nationally and internationally

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II. Cooperative Doctoral Platform

Cooperative doctorates according to this agreement are doctorates which are supervised jointly by at least two persons who belong to different universities of the Research Campus of Central Hessen. In order to conduct these cooperative doctorates, the Research Campus has a Cooperative Doctoral Platform. Doctoral procedures shall be conducted pursuant to the regulations in this section; they shall be supplemented by the pertinent doctoral regulations in place in the faculties of the participating universities, provided no divergent regulations are contained in this section.

§ 6 Doctoral Committee

(1) In order to conduct cooperative doctorates, a Doctoral Committee shall be formed at the Research Campus of Central Hessen. It shall support the participating universities in cooperative doctoral procedures. It shall prepare the acceptance of doctoral applicants in the cooperative doctoral procedures. It shall examine the criteria which must be fulfilled for acceptance in a cooperative doctoral procedure. If the outcome is positive, the Doctoral Committee shall inform the Doctoral Commission (Promotionsausschuss) belonging to the faculty to which the cooperative doctoral procedure is assigned. If no valid objection is raised within 30 days by the pertinent Doctoral Commission, the doctoral student shall be regarded as accepted. In the case of a valid objection, the Doctoral Committee shall present its counter-argument to the faculty. If the Doctoral Commission of the faculty does not support the counter-argument, the application shall be regarded as rejected. The Senates of the universities may decide that the final decision may rest with the Doctoral Committee.

(2) The doctoral supervisor who does not belong to the faculty to which the cooperative doctoral procedure is assigned shall have the right to attend the meetings of the Examining Committee (Prüfungskommission) of the the faculty as a member with equal rights.

(3) The Doctoral Committee shall be comprised of three researchers from each of the participating universities who shall be appointed by the respective universities' Executive Boards for a term of two years; re-appointment shall be possible. The member of the Executive Board of a participating university who is responsible for research shall belong to the Doctoral Committee as the alternating advisory and chairing member, starting with Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Science).

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(4) The Faculty Council of the faculty of the university in which the doctorate is to take place may delegate another voting member to the Doctoral Committee.

(5) The Doctoral Committee shall be given administrative support by the Management Office of the Research Campus; said Management Office shall collaborate with the responsible Examination Offices of the universities.

§ 7 Application for Conducting Cooperative Doctoral Procedures

(1) The application for conducting a cooperative doctoral procedure shall be submitted to the Doctoral Committee via the Management Office of the Research Campus. The documents to be submitted with the application shall include an exposé of the doctoral project and such documents as are required by the relevant faculty to which the cooperative doctorate is to be assigned, pursuant to the Doctoral Regulations.

(2) The Doctoral Committee shall determine in which university faculty the doctorate shall take place and decide on the acceptance of the doctorate pursuant to Section II § 6 Paragraph 1.

§ 8 Supervision Agreement

In order to conduct a cooperative doctoral procedure, a supervision agreement shall be compulsory. Should the pertinent Doctoral Regulations contain no regulations on this, the Doctoral Committee shall decide in what form said agreement shall be made.

§ 9 Certificate

A successful doctorate shall be documented by a certificate which shall contain the seal of the university at which the doctorate was conducted, the seal of this university's faculty, and the seal of the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences) alongside a statement that the doctorate was conducted at the Research Campus of Central Hessen.

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III. Co-optation Options

The Executive Board of the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences) may propose excellent researchers for co-optation to the university faculties.

The criteria for determining research ability are attached to this agreement in Annexe 1.

Co-opted members shall have the same rights in the faculties with respect to the doctoral procedure as full members of the faculty.

IV. Engineering Doctoral Centre

The Research Campus shall establish a Doctoral Centre for conducting engineering doctorates with the participation of all three universities.

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V. Final Provisions

This agreement was ratified by the respective Senates of Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences) on 12 October 2016, of Philipps-Universität Marburg on 14 September 2016 and Justus Liebig University Giessen on 7 September 2016 as well as by the respective Executive Boards of Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (University of Applied Sciences) on 23 September 2016, of Philipps-Universität Marburg on 26 July 2016 and Justus Liebig University Giessen on 26 July 2016.

On the dates stated above, the respective Senates of Philipps-Universität Marburg and of Justus Liebig University Giessen decided, in the case of a ratification of this agreement, to publish the regulations under Section II in their respective bulletins as “Statutes on Conducting Cooperative Doctoral Procedures” after the respective Executive Boards have given their consent.

Marburg, 02 November 2016

For the Justus Liebig University Giessen:

Prof. Dr. Joybrato Mukherjee
(President)

For the Philipps-Universität Marburg:

Prof. Dr. Katharina Krause
(President)

For the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen:

Prof. Dr. Matthias Willems
(President)

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Annexe 1 to the Cooperation Agreement, Research Campus of Central Hessen

Catalogue of criteria of the University of Applied Sciences (Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen) to assess research ability in the framework of co-optation procedures

Research ability shall be assessed on the basis of an evaluation procedure.

The applicant must prove his or her research ability by submitting the following for assessment:

- List of publications from the last five years (peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals, articles in books, patents)
- List of the five most important publications
- List of externally funded projects
- List of degree theses supervised by the applicant
- List of completed and current doctoral thesis projects supervised by the applicant
- Details of prizes and awards received by the applicant
- Three evaluations/recommendations:
 - one evaluation/recommendation by a professor from the university faculty to which the applicant is to be co-opted
 - one evaluation/recommendation from a professor preferably from a foreign university
 - one further evaluation/recommendation
- Further details, e.g. cooperation with other research institutions and companies; work on committees, in university bodies, scientific societies, commissions; scientific classes taught, etc.

If the applicant has a *habilitation* (postdoctoral qualification), the only evaluation required is from the university faculty to which the applicant wishes to be co-opted.