

## Germany Today 2020

Facing Today's Societal Challenges: German Universities' and Research Institutions'  
Interdisciplinary, Interinstitutional and International Cooperation Approaches

June 14 – June 20, 2020



***DAAD invites representatives from universities, research institutions and funding agencies in the United States and Canada, as well as colleagues from the fields of education policy and politics, to join us for our “Germany Today” Information Tour 2020.***

DAAD's information tour “Germany Today” is designed to give participants a broad overview of Germany's higher education landscape. This includes:

- An overview of Germany's higher education and research systems
- An update on current developments, innovative projects and structural reforms
- Details about BA and MA programs, as well as PhD training at various institutions
- Information on funding opportunities for academic exchange and institutional cooperation

This year's tour will focus on how higher education institutions in Germany approach today's societal challenges through engaged modes of interdisciplinary, interinstitutional and international cooperation.

Environmental changes, artificial intelligence, and ageing populations are just a handful of societal challenges being faced today on a global scale. In order to adequately address these issues, an interdisciplinary and international approach is key. In addition to this, substantial resources are required to conduct analysis on the scientific background pertaining to these issues—interinstitutional efforts allow these resources to be tapped both wisely and effectively.

The German government has recognized these structural necessities and, as a result, allocates public funding schemes in order to support interdisciplinary, interinstitutional and international cooperation. Examples of these include the creation of excellence clusters and joint research institutions. On the European level, the new European Universities Initiative addresses societal challenges and skills shortages being faced in Europe. This call has initiated several highly promising activities at German universities.

The Germany Today 2020 tour offers participants the opportunity to exchange best practices, effective methodologies, and lessons learned between the German Hosts and the North American guests.

The tour includes on-site visits to a variety of universities and research institutes whose focus areas and approaches to collaborative, interdisciplinary research and teaching span a diverse spectrum.

The 2020 tour will visit the following institutions in Dresden, Jena, Leipzig, Potsdam and Berlin:

### Dresden

1. *Technische Universität Dresden* (<https://tu-dresden.de/>) Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) is one of the largest technical universities in Germany and one of eleven German Universities of Excellence. With 18 faculties in five schools, it offers a wide range of 124 degree courses and covers a broad research spectrum. TU Dresdens focus areas, health sciences, biomedicine & bioengineering, information technology & microelectronics, smart materials & structures, energy, mobility & environment as well as culture & societal change are considered exemplary in Germany and throughout Europe.
2. CeTI (<https://www.ceti.one/>) The "Centre for Tactile Internet with Human-in-the-Loop" of TU Dresden aims to catapult the cooperation between man and machine to new heights by enabling mutual learning strategies. At the Cluster of Excellence CeTI, scientists from different fields, namely electrical engineering, communication technology, computer science, psychology, neuroscience, and medicine are working together with researchers from several national and international scientific institutions to pursue this goal. They take an interdisciplinary approach to investigating key areas of human control in the cooperation between man and machine, software and hardware design, sensor and actuator technologies, and communication networks.

### Jena

3. *Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena* (<https://www.uni-jena.de/en/University.html>) Founded in 1558, the Friedrich Schiller University Jena is one of the oldest universities in Germany. Once the centre of German philosophical thought, it has become a broad-based, research-intensive institution with a global reach, and a thriving international community of about 18,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students from over 110 countries worldwide. With its partners in academia, high-tech industry and top-level non-university research institutions, the University has established a strong network of cooperation and forms the centre of an internationally recognized, vibrant, and productive scientific and economic region in central Germany. The University also has a long history of excellence in learning and teaching. It has consistently been rated one of Germany's best universities for the education and the support it provides to students from all backgrounds.
4. *Cluster of Excellence "Balance of the Microverse"* (<https://microverse-cluster.de/en/>) The interactions of complex microbial communities with each other, with higher organisms and with the abiotic environment determine the functioning of ecosystems, our climate and the well-being of all organisms. Human activities or infectious microorganisms can dramatically disturb microbial communities and may result in the deterioration of ecosystems, weather extremes, severe crop losses or disease. The research cluster combines expertise in microbiology, chemical biology, infection biology, clinical medicine, ecology, optics/photonics, materials science, bioinformatics and ethics at the Friedrich Schiller University, the university hospital and eight non-university research institutes in Jena.
5. *UniWiND/ GUAT* (<https://www.unikon.uniwind.org/ueber-uns/about-us-information-in-english>) The German University Association of Advanced Graduate Training was established in 2009. It is the only national organization in Germany that is dedicated solely to the advancement of (post-) doctoral education and training. The network fosters cross-university exchange of good practices on issues of common concern related to opportunities, challenges and reforms of graduate education. Currently, UniWiND/GUAT has more than 70 member universities. Since 2013, the office is hosted in the House for Young Researchers of the University of Jena. This allows to realize synergies with existing structures, especially with the Graduate Academy, and is in line with the university's strategic goal to create optimal conditions for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in Jena.

**Leipzig**

6. *Martin-Luther- Universität Halle-Wittenberg (MLU)* (<https://www.uni-halle.de/>) MLU offers a wide range of academic subjects in the areas of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and medicine. MLU cooperates closely with other universities, and with external research institutes and industries. This is visible at a local level on the Weinberg Campus, the second largest technology park in Eastern Germany.. Today the university has around 20,000 students among them 2,000 international students and 340 professors.
7. *Leipzig University* (<https://www.uni-leipzig.de/en/#c56>) Leipzig University (UL) is among the oldest in Europe. As an outward-looking, modern comprehensive university, Leipzig University strives to be one of the leading institutions of higher education in Germany. It benefits from a growing and creative city. With 155 degree programs, the university offers a unique variety of subjects. The university's research fields act as the interface for intensive cooperation with 22 scientific institutions in Leipzig. Since 2019 UL has been a member of the European University Alliance „Arqus“.
8. German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (*iDiv*,<https://www.idiv.de/en/about-idiv.html>) A consortium of eleven research institutions joined forces to establish iDiv in 2012. iDiv is a research centre funded by the German research Foundation (DFG) with about 377 employees and members based primarily in Halle, Jena and Leipzig. Here, researchers from 36 nations establish the scientific basis for the sustainable management of our planet's biodiversity. In order to better understand the complex phenomenon of biodiversity, the iDiv researchers are working on four overarching research areas: Biodiversity Patterns, Biodiversity Processes, Biodiversity Functions and Biodiversity and Society.

**Potsdam**

9. *University of Potsdam* (<https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/university-of-potsdam.html>) Since its founding in 1991, the University of Potsdam has continuously widened its academic profile and range of research. With Jewish theology, inclusive education, the digital engineering department, and the department of health sciences, which is currently being established, the spectrum of subjects has become both diverse and well-balanced. Being a frontrunner in Germany and Europe, the University of Potsdam is the lead partner of the “European Digital UniverCity (EDUC),” one of 17 pilot university alliances in the EU's European University Initiative. With partners in France, Italy, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, EDUC aims at creating a truly integrated European University with students, researchers and administrative staff who learn, impart and work at universities differing in size, age, native languages and disciplinary foci.

**Berlin**

10. *Present Future Forum Berlin* (<https://www.berlinerforum.tu-berlin.de/menue/aktuelles/>) The Present Futures Forum Berlin facilitates networks and cooperative projects between the humanities and social sciences on the one hand, and natural sciences and engineering on the other. It is a platform, initiated and managed by the TU Berlin, for multidirectional transfer and exchange to take on the great challenges of our future. The Forum fosters an integrated and multilateral relationship between traditional science and technology studies (STS) and practitioners in the science and technology community

11. *Die Junge Akademie* (<https://www.diejungeakademie.de/en/about-us/>) Die Junge Akademie, founded in 2000, is the first academy of young academics worldwide. It provides interdisciplinary and socially relevant spaces for young academics from German-speaking countries. Since then, it has become a role model and example for similar initiatives in many other countries. Die Junge Akademie has set itself two overriding tasks: encouraging academic, especially interdisciplinary, discourse among outstanding young academics as well as promoting initiatives at the intersection of academia and society.
12. DAAD Workshop: This workshop will wrap up the lessons learned of the tour. It will discuss conclusions which are relevant for the development of cooperation in both countries and inform about funding opportunities for joint initiatives.

The program will be interactive: our hosts will provide valuable insights into their activities, and you will be asked to share your perspectives and expertise with them.

North American participants in this program are typically senior administrators at leading universities in the U.S. and Canada (such as vice presidents for international affairs or heads of international offices), policy makers in federal and state/provincial governments or associations and other experts in the higher education field or in the respective research topics.

The program will be in English. Program-related costs in Germany (accommodation, domestic travel, most meals) will be covered by DAAD. The program officially starts in Dresden on Sunday afternoon, June 14, 2020 and ends with a dinner on Friday evening, June 19, in Berlin. The night from Friday, June 19, to Saturday, June 20, is also booked and covered by DAAD. Intercontinental travel is at the participant's expense.

Applicants must have U.S./Canadian citizenship or permanent residency, a demonstrated interest in Germany and transatlantic co-operation, and a relevant professional position. They should not have recently participated in another information trip to Germany.

Applications – ideally as one pdf-document - must be received by **March 15, 2020**. Please contact Ms. Uta Gaedeke at DAAD's New York Office at 212-758-3223 x209 or at [gaedeke@daad.org](mailto:gaedeke@daad.org) for further information.