



Joint declaration of the German Rectors' Conference, the German Association of University Chancellors and the German Association of Chancellors of Universities of Applied Sciences:

Innovation needs infrastructure

Germany needs a significant increase in its innovation dynamics in all areas of society in order to secure prosperity, social cohesion and the defence capability of a united Europe. Universities are key drivers of innovation in our society. With their contributions in studying and teaching, in research and transfer, they support the German research system and are a decisive factor for the success of the innovation turnaround that now needs to be initiated.

With last week's amendments to the Basic Law, the Bundestag and Bundesrat have cleared the way for an unprecedented effort by all stakeholders to massively improve the resource-related framework conditions, especially for science-led innovation processes, in the coming years.

The German Rectors' Conference, the German Association of University Chancellors and the German Association of Chancellors of Universities of Applied Sciences believe that innovation needs free and strong science. Economic growth, social cohesion and a highly developed defence capability require universities to be able to develop their full potential and harness the power of science and humanities to shape and drive forward the innovation turnaround. Functional, high-performance, secure and modern infrastructures are essential for this. University buildings, research and development laboratories and their equipment, libraries, computer centres, the entire digital infrastructure and its security, as well as teaching and learning spaces for modern study, are key future infrastructures with which universities play a decisive role in shaping the dynamics of innovation in science, industry and society. A lack of investment, lengthy planning and approval processes and ever-increasing regulation have led to a well-known backlog of construction, renovation and modernisation work at German universities, which now amounts to hundreds of billions of euros in financial terms.

Against this backdrop, we are calling on the federal government to work together with the federal states:

1. to set up a long-term joint federal and state government programme to provide a reliable, efficient and adequate framework for the gradual reduction of the backlog of construction work and the climate-damaging backlog of renovation and modernisation work at universities
2. to make all funds earmarked for construction, climate-friendly refurbishment and science-led modernisation of universities and their facilities available

directly or via the federal states on a binding basis in addition to existing plans

3. to make the additional funds available in simple and swift procedures without small-scale, time-consuming application requirements
4. to work towards ensuring that planning and approval in fast-track construction procedures can be significantly accelerated so that the efficiency of the German science system can make its contribution to the security and development of our country.