

**10 September 2020****HRK guiding questions on university cooperation with the People's Republic of China  
Future-proofing German-Chinese partnerships**

Yesterday, the Executive Board of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) approved guiding questions on university partnerships with the People's Republic of China. They will complement the general guidelines and standards for international partnerships, which the HRK formulated last April. The new publication sets out necessary and optional courses of action specific to the cooperation with China. It is designed to provide both universities as institutions and individual university members with stimulus, support and orientation in the establishment and further development of resilient partnerships with Chinese universities and academic institutions.

The People's Republic of China is an important cooperation partner of German universities; there are almost 1,400 cooperation agreements with Chinese partner institutions.

"In many areas, scientific cooperation with China is highly attractive, and in some scientific fields it is essential," said HRK President Prof Dr Peter-André Alt today in Berlin. "There is a high level of interest in dialogue and cooperation with Chinese researchers and students. However, in recent years we have seen restrictions being placed on academic freedom and an increase in legal requirements and organisational hurdles in cooperation on the Chinese side. Given this situation, the guiding questions are expected to provide support in the assessment of partnerships and prospects for partnership in each individual case."

HRK Vice-President Prof Dr-Ing. Bernd Scholz-Reiter, who headed the HRK working group on the formulation of the guiding questions, said the following: "A differentiated view of the specific framework conditions, objectives and content of individual partnerships is needed. This will facilitate the clarification of matters with Chinese partners where needed and at the same time identify rewarding development pathways. The guiding questions are designed to contribute to this."

The guiding questions are aimed at German universities and, with the goal of raising awareness, address the opportunities and risks from the perspective of German actors. It is envisaged that the guiding questions will be reviewed at regular intervals.

[View text of the resolution](#)