

13 November 2017**Prize for Higher Education Communication 2017 in Potsdam:
Social responsibility in difficult times**

The Prize for Higher Education Communication 2017 was awarded today in Potsdam to the University of Cologne and its Communications & Marketing Department. The theme of this year's prize was "Knowledge for society: communicating current higher education research". The prize, endowed by the Robert Bosch Foundation with €25,000, is awarded by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and publisher ZEIT jointly with the Foundation.

HRK President Horst Hippler said in his welcome address that the theme had been a deliberate choice in view of the massive success of populists, also in western democracies including Germany. He said that it was necessary to ask to what extent universities and science overall made every effort to support people's informed participation in social debates. Communicating research is as pertinent to this issue as to the question why populists manage to discredit and marginalise scientific work, he added.

Katrin Rehak, Director of the Science Division at the Robert Bosch Foundation, emphasised that good communication achievements by universities should no longer be measured solely by the benefit to their own institution and their own institutional goals, but also by the extent to which all sections of society were able to understand the workings, the benefits and also the limits and uncertainties of science.

"Science can provide guidance in an environment of ever more rapid communication," said HRK President Hippler. "Whether it actually manages to do so, is an extremely political question. The universities in all their diversity, and as centres of the German research system, play a crucial role here." He stated that science was the counter-model to populism. One of the greatest challenges, he said, consisted in communicating the value of its principles of doubt, inquiry without predetermined results, and methodological transparency.

The prize for higher education communication is endowed by the **Robert Bosch Stiftung**