

**6 March 2014**

**The Internationalisation of the Universities:**

**The Federal Ministry for Education and Research to continue to fund the HRK Audit**

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) Audit "Internationalisation of Universities" is so highly in demand that the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) is to continue to fund it until the end of 2016. The audit helps universities to develop a stronger and more focused approach to international issues.

The BMBF is thus acknowledging the success the project has enjoyed over the last five years during which 42 universities have already participated; they will now be followed by 36 more.

"Internationalisation is a key component in the development of the profiles of universities in Germany," said Federal Minister of Education and Research Prof. Johanna Wanka today at the launch of the new project phase. "The Federal and Länder Ministers of Education will continue to support the universities in their future development, as was agreed last year in their joint Strategy for the Internationalisation of the Universities in Germany."

HRK President Prof. Horst Hippler said "We see internationalisation as a task for the whole institution, one which can only be achieved with a strategic approach. The audit therefore looks at the specific targets and structures of each university and the prevailing external circumstances. Each university receives individual and comprehensive advice."

Funding from the BMBF will cease when the new project phase comes to an end. The participating universities are already contributing a considerable share of the financing for the audit themselves. The HRK will use the next few years to offer the Re-Audit "Internationalisation of Universities" on a larger scale and to develop additional counseling formats.

The whole of the higher education system in Germany is now benefiting from the audit which offers a broad range of best practice examples. Measures which work at one university can often be applied to another. For example, there are only few tuition-free places for German students in English-speaking countries. Furtwangen University of Applied Sciences therefore finds paid work placements for students from its Anglo-American partner institutions in return for free places at the university in question, a strategy which allows students from both universities to benefit. HRK President Hippler said "The audit also helps to identify problems which affect internationalisation in every German university. The project has brought numerous new issues to the attention of the higher education world at large, such as the internationalisation of teacher training and the necessity of an institutional language policy".