

**26 January 2016**

**HRK President ahead of the recommendation by the Imboden Commission on the Excellence Initiative:**

**Do not place the future procedure under false time constraints**

German universities are anxiously awaiting the so-called Imboden Commission's recommendations on the Excellence Initiative. In Berlin today, HRK President Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler said:

"I am confident that the commission will make one thing clear: those who want to promote scientific excellence can only do this in a science-driven procedure. If the federal government and federal states were to dilute this principle, it would put their own success at risk. Universities from every region must be given the opportunity to present their plans which must allow for collaboration with the partners of their choice across Germany.

A new Excellence Initiative can set important new trends for our research system. The right amount of continuity is important here. This means it must be possible both to create completely new projects and continue existing projects.

A rapid policy decision by the federal government and federal states regarding the schedule is extremely important. Universities must be able to give many excellent researchers, who, because of their expertise, have the choice of working at a number of locations, the signal of when and under which conditions preparation for the next application round can begin. The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) also needs a sufficient amount of time to prepare and perform the challenging review process. In any case, the tried-and-tested two-stage procedure must remain in place. The quality of the procedure must, by no means, diminish, so bridge financing for one year may be the solution. The successor programme must not start under false time constraints."