14 May 2014
HRK General Meeting:
Management of research data as a strategic function of university management

Increasing volumes of digital data are playing a growing part in research. Researchers need an environment in which they can work with this data legally, efficiently and without any complications. In recent years, there have been urgent calls from the German Council of Science and Humanities, among others, for better national coordination and cooperation on research data management.

The General Meeting of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) has now discussed the necessary action to be taken in the universities and the strategic function of university management. Management faces the challenge of harmonising and integrating data management throughout the entire university to a sufficient extent but leaving enough flexibility for the varying requirements of the different subject areas.

The HRK General Meeting recommended yesterday in Frankfurt am Main that the universities agree guidelines on how to deal with digital research data, enter into agreements with other universities and non-university research institutions and support subject-specific data infrastructures. University management is called upon to improve the information skills of staff and students and to create the structural framework for efficient research data management for the whole institution.

The General Meeting called upon the Federal Government and the federal states to assume responsibility for the coordination essential for the development of robust information infrastructures beyond the borders of the federal states. Policy-makers also need to agree on the funding required. The HRK proposes that the Council for Information Infrastructures, agreed by the Joint Science Conference, should take on a coordinating role and work closely with the HRK.

The HRK is currently working on a further recommendation which contains more detailed proposals for the implementation of research data management.

Text of the recommendation

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