

ES GILT DAS GESPROCHENE WORT

29.08.2011

Grußwort von Universitätspräsident Gerhard Fouquet

zur Microscopy Conference MC 2011 an der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel

Distinguished guests,
dear colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to Kiel and to the Microscopy Conference in 2011! On behalf of all of us at Kiel University I should first like to say how honoured we are to be host to this illustrious conference! Before I talk about the current situation regarding Kiel University and our partners here today, I would like to take this opportunity to describe the present and future situation of our university and the situation of Nano sciences here in Kiel.

Founded in 1665, Kiel University in the last few years has experienced a surprising development in its research. By 2010, third party funding had risen by over 120% to about 110 M Euro, compared to a household budget of only 185 M Euro. The university is currently involved in nine collaborative research centres, funded by the German Research Foundation. Since 2008 we have had four research foci, all of which are participating in the German Excellence Initiative: Marine and Geosciences and Applied Life Sciences, and Societal, Environmental and Cultural Change, within a Graduate School, and, last but not least, Nano and surface science.

With this steady increase in research progress, Kiel University is not alone. In the last few years around 40 German universities have shown similar developments. The German "Wissenschaftsrat" (Scientific Council) has characterized these universities, with 20,000 to 40,000 students, as educational institutions in which the international profile is defined by a few individual segments or research foci, rather than by the institution as a whole. As here in Kiel, all these universities are more or less comprehensive in their subjects, they strive to offer good teaching conditions, while at the same time they show above average performance in international research.

Our aim here in Kiel is to maintain and even improve on our current position in the upper third of German universities.

I will refrain here from cataloging all the criteria and measures – at home and internationally – that are necessary to maintain this position.

Instead, I would like to concentrate on our continual improvement, on the development of cooperations between ourselves, the universities, and non-university research institutions, in the case of Nano and Surface sciences, between Kiel University and the Fraunhofer Institute for Silicon Technology, and the Helmholtz Center for Materials and Coastal Research. I firmly believe that these cooperations between universities and non university research institutions are essential for the future development of Kiel and of course the other German universities. In these active collaborations we are creating strong science locations, even science regions for the future.

Our new research focus "Kiel Nano Sciences" marks the beginning of a new, research driven model of regional cooperation between a university and a Fraunhofer and Helmholtz Institute. It is sustained here by the Faculties of Engineering, Mathematical and Natural Sciences and Medicine. The focus has a new Cluster of Excellence: "Materials for Life", which is now applying for full funding in the German Excellence Initiative. It is based on the experience of three Collaborative Research Centers and cutting-edge infrastructure including the Kiel Nano-laboratory.

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The Cluster "Materials for Life" explores new intelligent materials exhibiting complex multiple sensing and actuating properties for medical applications. The Cluster aims to apply these new materials for the continuous monitoring and treatment of critical health conditions. This allows cutting edge diagnostics and provides new options for medical therapy.

Ladies and gentlemen, finally and most importantly, I would like to thank all those who have made this conference in Kiel possible: our thanks go to the DGE – the German Society for Electron Microscopy - and its collaboration partners.

Dear Wolfgang Jäger, you have worked like a Trojan to make this possible! Please accept my heartfelt thanks to you and the organising committee for all your efforts. On behalf of Kiel University I wish you and all present, much success and enjoyment at the conference this week!