



Dear colleagues,
dear staff,
dear students,

After six months in office I have not only come to know our University well, it has also become a very pleasant place of work and one with which I gladly identify myself. I was able to participate in many activities but unfortunately also had to reject invitations,

as the main focus of my work is the creation of the Institutional Strategy as part of the 2nd programme phase of the Excellence Initiative. However, I am sure that the opportunity to visit those departments that I have not yet been able to know more closely will arise over the coming year.

Preparations for the Excellence Initiative making good progress

Thanks to the advice and help of many associates of the University we were able to develop a very good, forward-looking concept, which we will now refine before submitting the application on the 30th of August. It contains successful measures from the first Institutional Strategy such as the Courant Research Centres, which have attracted outstanding junior scientists from all over the world to Göttingen, sabbaticals for established academics, and the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, which offers fellows from all over the world the space for intensive research. In addition there will however also be completely new points, such as the preservation of the academic collections and improvement of their use in research and teaching, as well as the establishment of a virtual research environment for all faculties in the eResearch project. Last but not least, under the Brain Gain scheme we want to increase the transparency of the career opportunities at our University for those junior scientists who are not aiming for a professorship, and we are striving to establish more comprehensible selection processes for tenured positions. On the 20th and 21st of December of this year the evaluation will take place on-site and I am very much hoping for your support during this time. The decision on the application will then be made in June 2012.

15th of July 2011

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Submissions in the funding lines II and II consist of three applications, two graduate schools (GGNB and GEWINA) and one Cluster of Excellence (CNMPB, Microscopy at the Nanometer Range and Molecular Physiology of the Brain). The applications are largely complete and we hope to receive corresponding approvals, as a cluster and a school are necessary for being successful with the Institutional Strategy in funding line III.

An important prerequisite for the approval of the Institutional Strategy is of course the implementation of the measures from the first round. Here the Courant Research Centres, of which all but one have been evaluated, have developed very well. The assessors were very impressed and I was particularly delighted that the junior professors in the centres were praised not only for their outstanding research, but also for committed and extremely high-quality teaching.

The Lichtenberg-Kolleg was assessed as being very successful by its international scientific council. The Free Floater Research Groups, who set their own focal points outside of interdisciplinary research centres and independent of the faculties' research directions, have also proven successful. Last but not least, we have been able to recruit many young scientists and the provision for young families has been improved considerably.

A good foundation for the Excellence Initiative is also the success we have had in acquiring joint projects for the University. In addition to the funding we have already obtained in recent years, I am pleased to say that further approvals have followed this year. We have, for instance, been successful in the *Qualitätspakt Lehre* [Quality in Teaching Pact] and been able to obtain an anticipated sum of around 17 million Euros for improvement of teaching with the project Campus QPLUS. Additionally, together with ten other higher education institutions in Lower Saxony, the University of Göttingen is participating in the project eCULT (eCompetence and Utilities for Learners and Teachers), which is expected to receive support in the amount of 5.4 million Euros. The German Research Association (DFG) has extended funding of the Collaborative Research Centre 755 »Nanoscale Photonic Imaging«, the neurosciences have gained acceptance as part of the German Centre for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE), and the draft on biodiversity has been selected in the first application round to become a DFG Research Centre. Furthermore, Göttingen successfully applied to become a partner location of the German Centre for Cardiovascular Research, which in the development phase until 2014 receives funding in the amount of 7.5 million Euros and thereafter five million Euros per annum. In addition to the Faculty of Medicine and other faculties, two of Göttingen's Max Planck Institutes and the German Primate Centre are also involved.



Extensive programme for the University Jubilee planned

Next year we will be celebrating the 275th birthday of our University and we already have to press ahead with the planning. As well as an official ceremony, the celebration week programme from the 29th of May to the 2nd of June includes a citizens' reception at the Wilhelmsplatz, an open day in the Assembly Hall, a panel discussion and many varied cultural events. In addition we

will host a meeting of the Coimbra Group, an association of 40 renowned European universities, and in the Paulinerkirche we will be opening an exhibition featuring our academic collections. Above all we want to hold a staff celebration on the 31st of May, which is being planned together with the staff committees. I hope that many of you will join in the festivities during the jubilee week. There will also be numerous other activities taking place throughout the year, including a »Night of Science« on the 24th of November 2012.



Germany Scholarship launches this winter semester

Very pleasing but also quite labour-intensive for all the universities involved is the opportunity we have to award 105 Germany Scholarships this year. For this we first have to obtain money from private donors amounting to half the scholarship, which is then doubled from federal funds. We hope to attract a sufficiently high number of private donors for the planned scholarships. With these we can support students on application with an annual sum of 3,600 Euros. As soon as the details of the application process and the dates have been set we will inform all students by email.

Beginning this winter semester a new »dialogue-oriented admissions procedure« was to be implemented throughout Germany. Unfortunately, however, this procedure was not sufficiently developed and as a result admissions will yet again follow the old process. In this regard our University, along with the other universities in Lower Saxony, not only faces the challenge of providing a sufficient number of university places for the double cohort of school leavers combined with the simultaneous suspension of conscription, but it also has to offer students an education of as high a quality as in normal intake years. I am confident, though, that with the additional funds made available as well as an extra effort on the part of teaching and administrative staff we will also meet this challenge. My thanks go to all who are showing particular commitment here.



High demand for Family Service

Additionally, I am pleased to be able to tell you that the University is further extending the range of services offered by the Family Service. Due to high demand, Renate Putschbach has been on hand since June 15th as point of contact for students and staff, and offers advice on the range of services provided for the improved compatibility of academic life, studying, work and family. With this the Family Service contributes to enhancing the attractiveness of the University as a location for studying and working. The facility is located in the Goßlerstraße 9 in the Equal Opportunities Office.

Cooperation in the »Spirit of Göttingen«

Throughout the preparation of the Institutional Strategy the collaboration with our non-University partners has been very congenial, and I have found the cooperative atmosphere in the University and on the Göttingen Research Campus very stimulating. It really does exist, the »Göttingen Spirit« described by Courant.

The drafting of the various applications has made it difficult for the participating scientists to find enough time for their own research, but the many excellent ideas are a good basis for sustainable positive development for the Georgia Augusta. And thus I am very much looking forward to the years in Göttingen ahead of me

Prof. Dr. Ulrike Beisiegel
President