

Go-ahead for Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)

The German government and the state of Baden-Württemberg have agreed to the merger between Karlsruhe University and the Karlsruhe Research Centre, to be known as the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

Federal Research Minister Annette Schavan and the Baden-Württemberg Minister of Science, Peter Frankenberg, have agreed on the merger of the Karlsruhe Research Centre (Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe) with the University of Karlsruhe.



Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

On 18th February 2008, the two ministers confirmed that the creation of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is in line with their common goal of creating a completely new type of cooperation between university and non-university research, which is unique in Germany. The ministers agreed that the number of employees, budget and equipment will in future enable the KIT to close ranks on internationally leading research institutions and to compete for scientific leadership.

State university and large non-university research organisation

"The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology will be a public corporation and, under Baden-Württemberg

law, fulfils two tasks. It will be a state university as well as a large, non-university institution of the Helmholtz Association,” said Minister Schavan in Berlin. In terms of large-scale research, the German government and the Helmholtz Association will retain their previous influence and control; in addition to that, the KIT will open up new strategies for cooperating with university research and education.

“The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology can only be successful if it is based on an equal partnership,” emphasised Minister Frankenberg. Both Frankenberg and Schavan pointed out that the KIT is an institution that combines the scientific skills of a university with those of a large research institution. The advantages of each system will now be combined under one roof.

Students, PhD students and other staff members will benefit from the creation of KIT



Court of Honour of Karlsruhe University (Photo: Wikipedia)

The ministers also agreed that PhD and other students as well as other staff members will benefit from the model because it opens up numerous new opportunities. “KIT is built on growth,” highlighted Schavan and Frankenberg, adding that the number of staff will not be reduced and that work and salary issues will not be touched. The ministers further highlighted that the KIT’s future structure will contribute to promoting scientific excellence and cross borders that impede scientific progress. It will also be a new way for research institutions and universities to work in cooperation with each other in planning new structures and developments.

In research, this means a joint strategy in appointment and procurement issues, broader,

complementary skills and a well-balanced value creation chain from basic research to application, easier joint research as well as the joint use of the research infrastructure. Education will profit from the integration of students into large-scale research and from the broadness of subjects, the greater interdisciplinarity and the proximity to application. It is hoped that this will contribute to increasing the quality of teaching and career opportunities. In addition, the junior researchers of the Research Centre will be given the opportunity to undertake teaching qualifications.

A uniform legal framework

The legal framework for the KIT will be developed in detail up until autumn 2008. With KIT, the partners are working to turn into reality what began with Karlsruhe University's candidacy in the German government's excellence initiative. The international reviewers have clearly supported the KIT concept.

The two partners have already developed a well-founded concept. The first milestone on the way to a total merger was the signing of a cooperation agreement in 2007, in which the partners agreed to group their organisation structure and adapt their strategic decisions. With the decision of the two ministers to establish a uniform legal framework for KIT, the road towards a total merger has been completed, said Schavan.

Press release

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Further information

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