



# Mission Statement of the University of Hohenheim

Decision by the University of Hohenheim Senate on 15 July 2015



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## Preamble

The University of Hohenheim is a diverse, complex, and dynamic organization. Its members work together in academic self-administration. The common basis is the legal mandate, and the binding principles are set down in the structural and development plan, which lays out the common strategic development goals in five-year periods. This mission statement describes the University's self-understanding and the fundamental values behind its actions.

The statement has been formulated with a focus on the three major areas of the University: Research, studying and teaching, and the services supporting these areas. However, academic self-administration also means that individual members of the University are rarely active in only one single area. Usually, staff members are engaged at the same time in various functions at the university - as instructors, researchers, or in creating the requirements for successful science. The statements on the different areas are thus binding for all staff members, something that becomes clear in particular when discussing the understanding of leadership or respectful treatment of one another.

The University formulated this mission statement in 2015 while introducing a quality management system in all of its major areas. The mission statement is the starting point from which the individual areas derive their specific goals and measures for quality development and is simultaneously the framework upon which individual standards of behavior are oriented. The University views itself as a learning organization that reflects its principles. This mission statement is therefore developed further on a regular basis.

## Research

*Humankind's basic curiosity is the driving force of research. We carry out research in order to gain new scientific knowledge. Led by this scientific curiosity, we search for solutions to as yet unanswered questions with which we can make a contribution to resolving important issues.*

### Freedom of Research

Research is free and, in principle, the outcome is open. We believe the freedom of the individual researchers is a basic requirement for intrinsic motivation, creativity, originality, and the willingness to take risks, all of which characterize high-quality research. Research also always serves society, which in turn enables the research. As researchers, we obligate ourselves to observe the world with a critical perspective and to always respect the principles of academic probity. This also includes the willingness to reveal our own mistakes and errors and learn from them.

### Relevance and Visibility

In research, we address urgent challenges of our time and work in a structured and scientifically sound manner. This serves to elucidate mechanisms and linkages, develop new methods, and solve complex questions. We present our research activities and findings to the international scientific community for discussion. The ideas can thus be evaluated in competition with others, enabling us to continually develop our research. We also engage in public discourse about our research activities.



## Research

### Transparency

We present our questions, hypotheses, methodological approaches, findings, and conclusions to the scientific community in a transparent and replicable manner. As researchers, we question ourselves and are open to critical review. We are thereby led by the internationally recognized principles of good scientific practices.

### Research as a Collaborative Effort

We consider research to be a creative process that profits from dialog and the exchange of ideas. We encourage close collaboration among the disciplines within the University and outside of the University by cooperating with research institutions in Germany and abroad. We use and achieve synergies in the context of large collaborative research projects. In doing so, we ensure that the individual contributions of the researchers are made appropriately visible.

### Supervision and Scientific Qualification

Excellent research needs outstandingly qualified scientists. As supervisors, we therefore strive for reliable prospects for young scientists. We create space in which individual ideas can be further developed and implemented. We support our young scientists in all phases of their scientific work, including writing funding proposals and scientific publications. We support the national and international visibility of our young scientists with early integration into the scientific community.

### Research-Oriented Teaching

The integration of research in teaching is the prerequisite for excellent academic teaching. As researchers, we are therefore also teachers who convey the methods, theory, and praxis of scientific work. Our enthusiasm for research inspires the students' interest in gaining their own research experience. We thereby create an environment that includes creative young scientists and their ideas in research at an early stage.

### Research Environment

The University of Hohenheim strives toward the best possible conditions for researchers. In particular, this includes providing the necessary basic equipment to ensure that a researcher can work. The requirements for occupational health and safety and data protection are fulfilled in this process.

With its University-wide research infrastructure, the University also provides access to advanced technology. The joint use of this research infrastructure - e.g. in the context of the Core Facility or the Experimental Station - guarantees that the researchers obtain competent advice and that there is an effective capacity utilization of the infrastructure under the best possible conditions. The Research Promotion Department offers University of Hohenheim scientists professional support and program-oriented assistance in procuring and managing research projects. A research information system makes it possible for the community of researchers to give a transparent and comprehensive presentation of their research activities.





## Studies and Teaching

### Scientific Character

We introduce students to the ways of thinking and argumentation in the subject discipline and convey the methodology and ethics of scientific work, thus laying the foundation for lifelong learning. We motivate students at an early stage to think and work scientifically and fuel their interest in the research questions in the subject.

We encourage them to look beyond the horizons of their respective subject. We understand our research as an indispensable source for teaching and promote the mutual connections of research and teaching.

### Scientific Independence

We support students in independently obtaining competencies and give them orientation on their individual paths to successfully completing their studies.

We encourage the students to actively participate in courses, to give feedback to the instructors, and to participate in committees.

### Societal Relevance

We draw links to current challenges in politics, business, and society, and thus emphasize the relevance of the contents of their studies and learning. We strengthen the students' judgment.

### Competency Orientation

We orient our teaching offers on competency profiles. These take into consideration the demands of the job market and aim to enable our graduates to enter into a professional career. We support students in expanding their individual horizons by gathering experience in the praxis and abroad.

### Dialog Orientation

We maintain an open dialog with our target groups within and outside of the University - for example with students or partners in the business world. We continually develop our teaching both in terms of contents and performance. We promote the exchange of experience among instructors and support them in the further development of their subject-area knowledge and didactic abilities.

### Improvement in Infrastructure

We strive for sufficient resources in the area of studying and teaching and work towards technologically innovative infrastructure and an appropriate working space. We also work towards efficiently organized operations in teaching and studies.



## Supporting Services

### We Support Research and Teaching

We all support people who research, teach, and study at our University: We provide the necessary infrastructure and services, make information available, and advise and coordinate. We implement decisions on the further development of the University and present the University's achievements to the public. With our expertise and capabilities, we enable optimal conditions for research, teaching, and successful studies.

### We Work Professionally With and For Each Other

Our working conditions are continually changing due to new legislation, technological developments, and other societal demands. We view this as a challenge to think and act innovatively. We see our chance to shape change and provide our contribution for future-oriented structures and services for science.

To do so, we work together across departments and units. Our working methods are oriented on processes and projects. We always have our eye on the overall context in which our actions take place and the strategic goals of the University of Hohenheim.

We see professional work as work that has transparent, efficient, and goal-oriented processes together with modern technical support. We thereby ensure that valid laws and norms are followed and that resources are used responsibly.

### We Treat Each Other With Respect and Appreciation

Our intention is to be perceived as committed, friendly, and reliable, and we aim to accomplish our tasks competently and quickly.

We treat each other with respect and appreciation for the manifold abilities, characteristics, and attitudes of the University members. In a dialog with the scientists,

students, colleagues, and external parties, we are open for the concerns and expectations of the others. We work out solution-oriented suggestions that support others in achieving their goals. We explain and justify our actions and actively use the freedom we have. We thereby coordinate with colleagues and offer solutions "from one source" whenever possible. We are open for feedback on our work and continually develop our processes in dialog with the target groups.

### We Lead in an Employee-Oriented Manner

As people with managerial responsibilities, we identify with the goals and with the strategic direction of the University and actively participate in implementing them. We feel obligated to the principles of employee-oriented leadership. We actively and comprehensively inform employees in a timely manner, give clear work orders, and set priorities. We explain our decisions in an understandable way. We thereby give our team orientation and, at the same time, make it possible for each individual to take on responsibility and work independently.

Annual one-on-one meetings give both sides the possibility for constructive feedback and support the further development of cooperation. We promote the continuing development of our staff in their areas and in terms of methodological and social competencies. At the same time, we continually educate ourselves in order to strengthen our subject-area and leadership competencies. We support the successful integration of career and family obligations in all phases of life.