



Statement: Peter Frensch on the cancellation of a lecture during the Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften

Dear employees,

as you will not have failed to notice, the first Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften (LNdW) after two years took place again in Präsenz last weekend. Basically a joyful event, the planning and preparation of which was very challenging for all those involved. Many people at Humboldt-Universität also got involved in this "Festival of Science" and organised lectures, workshops and exhibitions. Many thanks are due to all those actively or indirectly involved!

On Saturday morning, the lecture entitled "Gender is not (Ge)bad: Sex, Gender and why there are two genders in biology", which was planned in the main building, had to be cancelled at short notice. One can discuss this decision. We will do this both in our committees and with suitable events in the near future. However, let me briefly explain the difficult decision and the weighing of interests already today. The lecture was cancelled solely in the interest of the overall event "Lange Nacht der Wissen-

schaften" with changing and uncontrollable public traffic in the main building.

The reason for this was protests against the lecturer, who came under public criticism for her collaboration on an article in the newspaper "Die Welt" at the beginning of June. The speakers' council of Humboldt University had sent out an email to the entire student body on Friday calling for participation in a demonstration against the lecture. In order to ensure that the planned event could still take place, security precautions were increased at an early stage. The potential for disruption and danger increased significantly with the counter-actions announced at short notice by supporters of the speakers. On Saturday morning, the university management had to assume a possible escalation, which would have disrupted all LNdW events in the main building and posed a danger to the safety of visitors and participants.

In consideration of the complex overall situation, the university management therefore decided to postpone the lecture. This event is currently being rescheduled. In addition, we are taking the current discussions as an opportunity to discuss the topic of academic freedom with internal and external guests in an inclusive format.

Peter Frensch
President of Humboldt-Universität

Interview: "We will always fight for academic freedom"

Prof. Dr. Christoph Schneider, Vice President for Research, reports in an interview on the HU intranet what exactly happened, why a rejection was justified from the university management's point of view and how the issue will be dealt with further.

[Read interview with Christoph Schneider](#)

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Photo: Ina Friebe

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Unter den Linden 6
10099 Berlin
Deutschland

E-Mail: interne-kommunikation@hu-berlin.de

www.hu-berlin.de