

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN



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A. Humboldt

# Mission Statement

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

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## AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

**1. HUMANITY AND THE SCIENCES.** ☞ The founding and rise of Humboldt-Universität were inspired by the conviction that the pursuit of knowledge engages and forms all human faculties and so contributes greatly to the humanization of society. Despite several setbacks, there still is today no better reason to promote knowledge and to secure the future of comprehensive education.

**2. CONTINUING REFORM IMPETUS AND THE STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE.** ☞ The Humboldt-Universität was established in a period of crisis as an autonomous institution charged with facilitating outstanding scholarly and scientific achievements and promoting the critical examination of established knowledge for the benefit of society. Today, this legacy is still holds after nearly 200 years. Those who work here should have the determination and the capability to advance knowledge and to take responsibility for its application.

**3. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CULTURAL PRESENCE.** ☞ To the extent to which the Humboldt-Universität identifies itself with its own tradition, it is also conscious of its own complicity in the dark periods of German history. In its annals we find subservience to state authority, class arrogance and political fanaticism, as well as examples of teaching and research which ignored the basic principles of human rights. Among its darkest chapters are the burning of books and cooperation in the persecution and expulsion of its members. Against this background, since its reorganisation in 1989 the Humboldt-Universität has seen itself as an institution which stands at a critical distance to political and social pressure. It fights every kind of discrimination, intolerance and cultural hubris.

**4. THE UNITY OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING.** ☞ Humboldt's ideal of the coexistence of research and teaching has become a model for universities all over the world. Central to this model is the idea of research-oriented teaching and the transfer of knowledge from the spirit of research. Students and teachers are joined together in an endeavour to critically examine traditional bodies of knowledge and to actively advance learning. For this reason, the Humboldt-Universität promotes social and communicative competences among all of its members and supports their initiatives wherever it can.

**5. ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS.** ☞ Studying at the Humboldt-Universität demands an active engagement in knowledge. This involves a critical assessment of its preconditions and implications. This is also why the goal of any program of study is not just to acquire disciplinary excellence, but also the education of a person, who combines reliability, efficiency, initiative and scientific curiosity. Every student must understand that he or she contributes to the state of the arts and sciences in our society. Our students have the right and the duty to assume responsibility, not only in the running of the university, but also in teaching and research.

**6. INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND IN COURSE STRUCTURES.** ☞ Studying and teaching require two forms of commitment: a commitment to stay current with the latest advances in knowledge and to serve the needs of society. Therefore, the continuous critical revision of the content and types of curricula is an integral part of the Humboldt-Universität's mission. Based on trust in the independence and the creativity of its teachers and students, this makes a large variety of strategies in teaching and learning possible. The reform of research-oriented teaching, however, can only succeed in the long run if the prestige of teaching is enhanced.

**7. RESEARCH IS THE LIFE-BLOOD OF THE UNIVERSITY.** ☞ The desire to conduct research is the innovative force behind any scholarly endeavour. Research keeps knowledge alive, it enables and requires a creative and productive crossing of disciplinary boundaries and institutions. As a prominent home for research, the Humboldt-Universität places great value on the preservation of the range of its disciplines and research institutes. This indispensable interdisciplinarity can only be guaranteed through the interaction of medicine, the sciences, the humanities, social sciences and the arts.

**8. PROMOTION OF JUNIOR RESEARCHERS.** ☞ All members of the university have the right to work independently, to the extent to their ability. The Humboldt-Universität endeavours to give junior researchers the opportunity to carry out their own teaching and research as early as possible in their careers, because the potential to ennial source for the renewal and revision of knowledge. The Humboldt-Universität does everything in its ability to make it possible for its members to combine parenthood, studying and research.

**9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL.** ☞ Providing equal opportunities for both women and men at the university as well as in society is an important goal of Humboldt-Universität. Accordingly, it does its best to ensure that opportunities are distributed fairly, and to utilize and promote women's abilities in teaching, research and administration. It employs all available means for achieving equal opportunity at all levels and promises to strengthen its gender studies efforts.

**10. RESOURCES, FUNDS AND ALUMNI.** ☞ The Humboldt-Universität must acquire additional resources to establish its own endowments, so that it can support additional activities in teaching and research. It provides the university's supporters and sponsors the opportunity to participate in its social and scholarly activities. Maintaining contact with its alumni and building an extensive alumni network is also considered an equally important goal.

**11. THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION.** ☞ Humboldt-Universität's renewal after 1989 has shown that it is possible to efficiently meet the challenges posed by autonomy. An indispensable part of this autonomy is complete transparency in all administrative processes. In organising smooth cooperation between its different institutions and groups, Humboldt-Universität relies on a combination of participation and individual responsibility as binding principles for all groups involved in the continuous process of reform. Teaching, research and the administration welcome regular external evaluations as an important element of the reform process.

**12. INTERNATIONALITY.** ☞ For a first-class university an international exchange in research, teaching and students is second nature. In accordance with its geographical location, the Humboldt-Universität has developed close relationships with northern, central and eastern Europe. This network has now been extended to universities and research centres in other parts of the world, in particular to institutions at the edges of the western world.

**13. A COSMOPOLITAN UNIVERSITY.** ☞ The Humboldt-Universität is the meeting place for many different life styles and cultures. The diversity of people which come together in the centre of Berlin creates a productive atmosphere, which the university wishes to use to promote the talent and vision of each of its members. It takes advantage itself of the stimulating surroundings which the local and the international environments provide and uses them responsibly the benefit of society and of the environment, by critically examining the world and actively working to change it.

**14. BERLIN – A CITY OF KNOWLEDGE.** ☞ Those who come to Berlin in order to study, to teach or to conduct research finds a multifaceted and richly structured landscape of universities and research institutes. The Humboldt-Universität is very interested in productive cooperation with other scientific, cultural and economic establishments in the area, as a way of furthering its own goals. With its unique artistic and scientific collections, it contributes considerably to the cultural life of the city. As a venue for social dialogue, it fulfils its role of a university at the heart of Europe.