

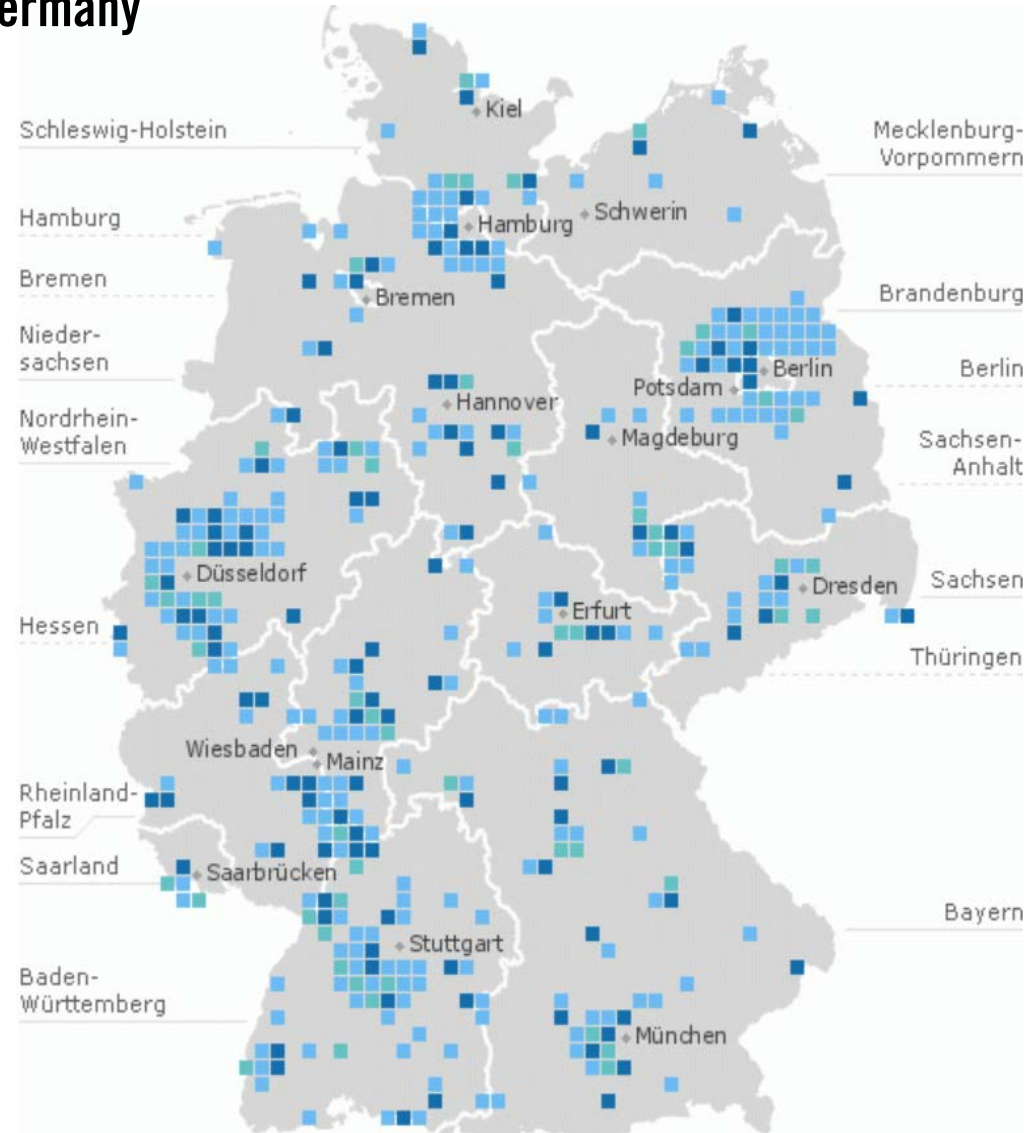


RESEARCH STRATEGY IN A MEDIUM-SIZED UNIVERSITY: THE CASE OF LEUPHANA

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Universities in Germany





Leuphana University Lüneburg in Lower Saxony



20 HEI in Lower Saxony

- 11 universities (incl. Leuphana):
 - internationally strong: U Göttingen, U Hannover, TU Braunschweig
 - more regional: U Oldenburg, U Osnabrück, TU Clausthal
 - focus on teachers' education: U Hildesheim, U Vechta
 - specialized HEI: Hannover Medical School, University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover
- 2 Universities of Arts
- 7 universities of applied sciences and further private HEI



Framing conditions for a research strategy: selected internal actors

Presidential Committee

Board of Trustees

- fostering research performance of the university as a whole
- pressure to raise income because of lack of core funding and partly performance based budget
- managing the trade-off with different tasks

Senate

- main body of academic self government
- decision on university development plan and staff decisions

Faculty

- maintaining study programme
- identifying broadly agreed research areas
- shaping internal structures
- constant activities to increase the Faculty's budget

Scientist

- individual scientific interest
- pressure to publish and raise funds
- individual career plans in the light of temporary contracts



Framing conditions for a research strategy: selected external actors

Regional Ministry as governing body

- **determining universities' development according to political visions**
- **structural decisions based on research evaluations**
- **systems for salaries and contract details**

Federal Ministry

political programmes as framing conditions:

- **promotion of young researchers**
- **fostering of thematic clusters**
- **excellence programmes**

Funding Agencies

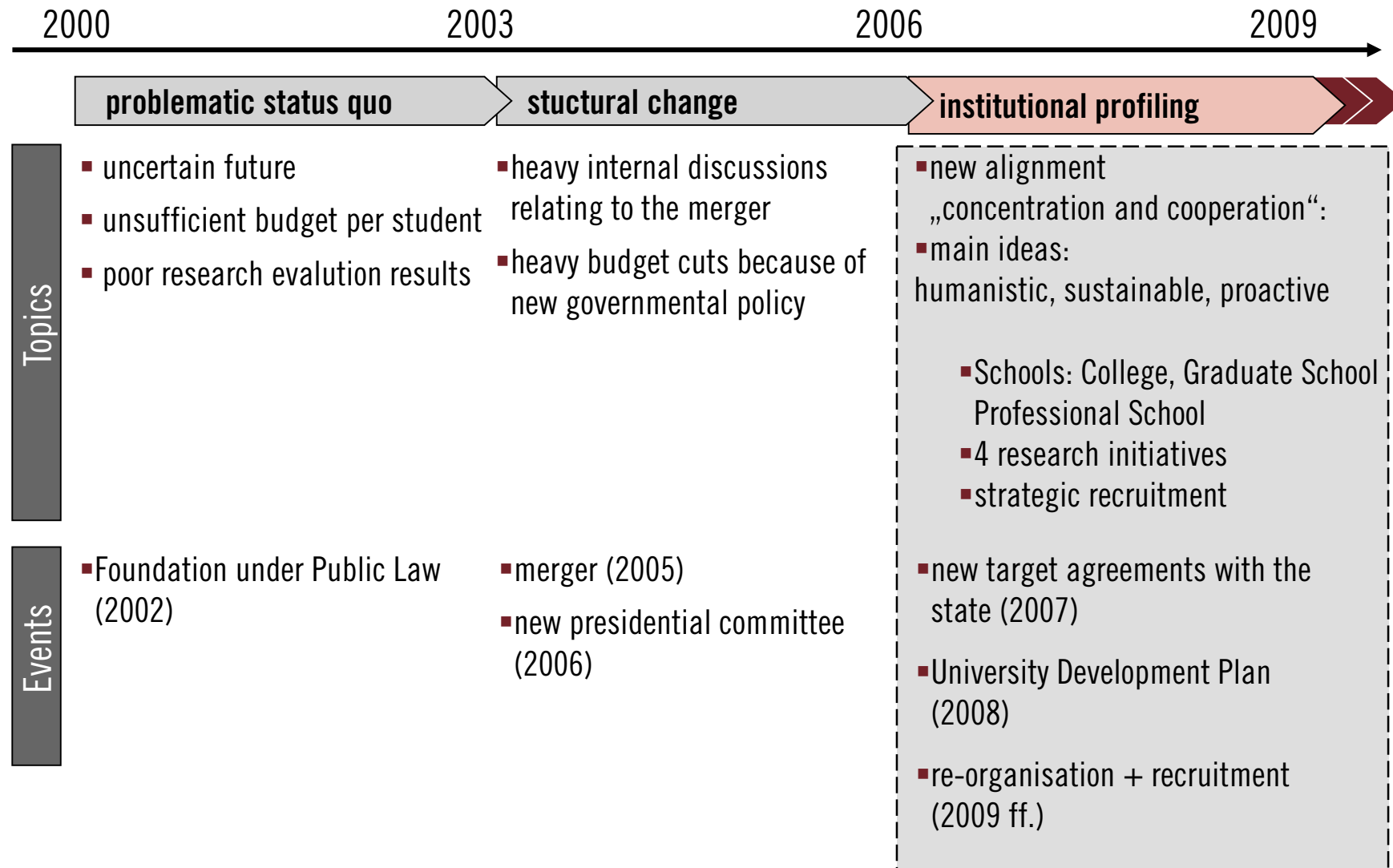
- **funding based on thematic priorities**
- **risk averse funding policies because of traditional structures and need to justify spent funds**
- **nearly no long term funding**

**Scientific Community
(scientists, peers, evaluators)**

- **establishing new research fields**
- **support of already strong institutions**

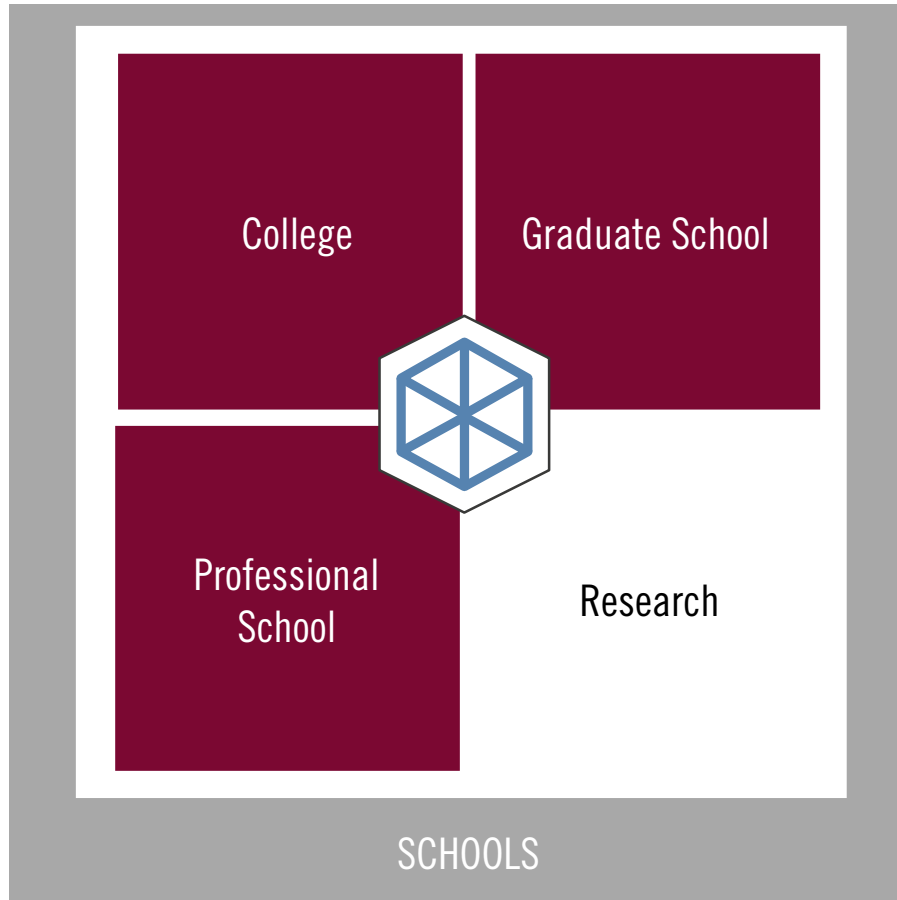


Last 15 years are a period of profound changes





Current organisational structure





Leuphana´s faculties

- 170 professors und
396 researchers (PhD, PostDoc)
- appr. 9,000 students
- 80% Humanities and Social Sciences
- 20 % natural sciences, engineering





Cultural Sciences: starting point 2007 (research evaluation) / 2008 (Leuphana development plan)



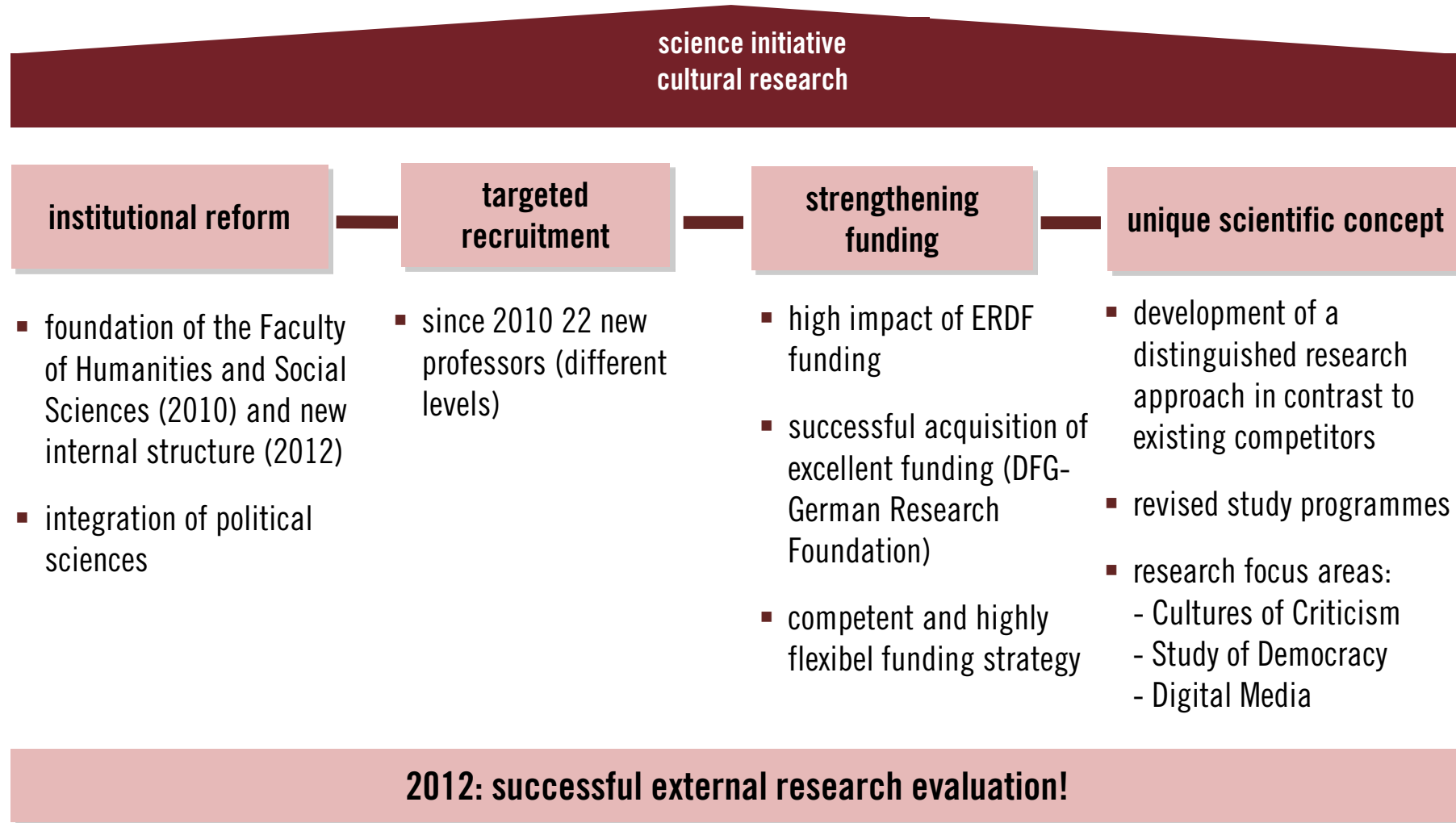
- „Lüneburg and cultural sciences“ well known in Germany and abroad
- broadly accepted course programme
- tradition of interdisciplinary cooperation



- strong focus on education + teaching
- nearly no third-party-funded projects
- research activities nearly invisible outside the region
- no integrative research approach
- weak integration in the university as a whole



Steps since 2007/08:





Strategic Instruments 1

Recruitment

- recruitment strategy of the Faculty was embedded in the recruitment activities of Leuphana as a whole: till 2012 50 new professors
- as a result significant qualitative improvement of research output
- Leuphana's small size and Lüneburg as a little town were no disadvantages in competition for talents and high potentials
- distinguished scientific profile is attracting
- increasing share of international professors
- highly interdisciplinary teams with broad activities in teaching and research
- support for overarching concept provides basis for excellence scheme proposals



Strategic Instruments 2

Funding (focus on Digital Media)

- successful funding chain from 2010 till today
- diversification: competitive funds from different sources (regional, DFG) were raised
- combined with recruitment strategies a foundation for proposals relating to large scale funding schemes were laid (esp. DFG Programme Collaborative Research Centre)
- effective proposal writing by scientists



2010-2015 ERDF : Innovations Incubator Leuphana:

Decision of the Incubator Structural Commission: investment focus on three thematic clusters

DREI THEMEN MIT ZUKUNFT



DIGITALE MEDIEN



GESUNDHEIT



NACHHALTIGE ENERGIE

Digital Media
Competence Tandems

4

14,5 Mio. €

ERDF

Health
Competence Tandems

5

13,3 Mio. €

ERDF

Sustainable Energy
Competence Tandems

3

6,3 Mio. €

ERDF




Thematic Cluster Digital Media – funding in total 14.5 Mio €:

Moving Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ embedded in structures which were developed in parallel▪ projects were led by permanent professors▪ large scale projects with high numbers of researchers and guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ERDF funding was finished at the end of July 2015- four ERDF projects laid the foundation for following funding success
Public Service Media 2.0		
Hybrid Publishing		
Art and Civic Media		



‘funding follow-up’ till 2020:

<p>2013-2018 Digital Cultures Research Lab (DCRL) (two stages, each 3 years, profound evaluation, 5 Mio. EUR)</p>	<p>competitive call State of Lower Saxony: - objective: establishing a location of research - large PhD group - network of guest scientist</p>	<p>common institution for ERDF, regional and DFG funding: Centre for Digital Cultures (CDC) currently in proposal process: DFG Collaborative Research Centre (Sonderforschungsbereich)</p>
<p>2013-03.2021 DFG/German Research Council: Media Cultures of Computer Simulation (two stages, each 4 years, profound evaluation, 9.7 Mio. EUR)</p>	<p>DFG excellence scheme for 2 scientists (competitive): - Institute of Advanced Study - large fellow network - „time and atmosphere to think“</p>	<p>in case of approval two stages, till appr. 2025</p>
		<p><i>Follow-Up Funding till 2025</i></p>
 <p>2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020</p>		



Strategic Instruments 3

Institutional Reform

- challenge: integration of high number of ERDF funded scientists into the Faculty, mainly in one (!) institute
- Centre for Digital Cultures (CDC) was established as „roof institution“
- the internal Faculty structure was reformed and new professors were appointed
- in 2015 the Incubator was finished and the „integration pressure“ was lower



Strategic Instruments 4

Unique Scientific Concept

- unique concept on the Faculty level
- distinguished approach in the research area „Digital Media“
- clear contrast to cooperating (but also competing) institutions, mainly in Germany
- Lüneburg approach: „digital media“ is seen as part of Humanities and Social Sciences (and not as part of media sciences)
- positive response from important US-American institutions (kind of „Lüneburg media sciences“)
- particular scientific approach compatible with overall Faculty strategy and scientific interests of new professors

Drivers



political/structural environment

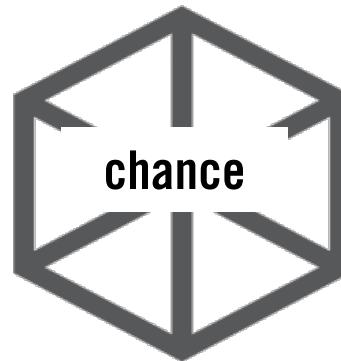
- autonomy
- local vs. urban?

reputation

- scientific (esp. international) community
- research evaluation
- cooperation potential

distinct positioning

- shaping topics
- innovative scientific approach



institutional efficiency

- positive and professional cooperation of all actors
- support service
- effective work flows

recruitment

- excellence
- commitment

funding

- diversification
- continuity
- availability (calls)



Constraints

political/structural environment

- regulatory framework (roll back)
- local vs. urban?

reputation

- traditional academic committees
- few people for many tasks

distinct positioning

- temporary character of topics
- imitation/“repeated Leuphana style“



institutional efficiency

- too many actors involved
- limited flexibility for change (e.g. study programme)

recruitment

- complex process with many actors
- perspectives for staff
- lack of commitment

funding

- temporary, competitive, topic oriented
- no access to constant basic funding

Thank you for your attention!