

Welcoming new institutes in the Leibniz Association and the Leibniz PhD Network

When doctoral researchers from all Leibniz Institutes were called to get together last year at the founding event and first General Assembly of the Leibniz PhD Network, 50 Leibniz Institutes were represented: that is 57%, out of the 88 institutes at the time. We are happy to share with you that we are currently in active communication with 75 institutes of today's 91 Leibniz member institutions (82% of all institutes). We hope to see this reflected by a great turnout at the second General Assembly in Rostock this September!

We want to give a special welcome to the following Institutes, which recently became part of the family of the Leibniz Association:

- Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe ([GWZO](#))
- Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies ([IOS](#))
- Leibniz-Centre General Linguistics ([ZAS](#))
- *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient* ([ZMO](#))

We also want to give a special welcome in the Leibniz PhD Network to the following institutes, whose PhD representatives recently became active members of the network:

- Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies ([IOS](#))
- Leibniz-Centre General Linguistics ([ZAS](#))
- Leibniz Institute for Diabetes Research at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf ([DDZ](#))
- FIZ Karlsruhe Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure ([FIZ KA](#))
- Leibniz Information Centre for Science and Technology ([TIB](#))

General Assembly 2017

This year, the General Assembly of the Leibniz PhD Network will take place in Rostock from 7-8 September 2017. The Leibniz Institute for Catalysis ([LIKAT](#)) will host the event and two PhD representatives from each Leibniz institute are welcome and encouraged to participate.

During the meeting, the PhD representatives will have the opportunity to get in contact with each other, exchange ideas and broaden their networks. Also the spokespersons and section officers for the next term will be elected and there will be votes on the standing rules of the PhD network. Representatives are

invited to address standing rules with suggestions for changes, which have to be handed in 6 weeks prior to the meeting the latest ([see §5](#)).

Further information regarding housing and travel will follow in the next months. We are very much looking forward to a big turnout in Rostock!



Side view of the Leibniz Institute for Catalysis (LIKAT), Rostock, Germany. Hosting institution of the second General Assembly of the Leibniz PhD Network.

Women in science and the participation of N^2 at *I,Scientist*

Gender equality within science has not yet been reached, just like in society. From the 12th to the 14th of May, scientists and engaged people met in Berlin to discuss topics related to gender in science. Much room was given for networking and to ponder possible career paths in science and related fields.



Together with Helmholtz Juniors and Max Planck PhDnet, Martin Schmidt, one of the spokespersons for the Leibniz PhD Network, represented as N^2 the doctoral researchers. We participated in the Networking Breakfast and other formats and talked about equal opportunities in non-university research organizations. Besides allowing us to broaden our horizon on that very important topic, this series of events will contribute to the cause of equal opportunities in science. Regarding the Leibniz PhD Network, we will engage ourselves more in the topics equal opportunities and working conditions. First, we plan a survey to ask the doctoral researchers within Leibniz what issues are most urgent to tackle. Second, we will probably work on a political statement within N^2 on equal opportunities and working conditions.

Official website of the event: [click here](#)

N²: Getting into politics

The German university landscape has been in a state of radical change for several years and with it the graduate or doctoral phase. The doctoral phase in Germany is in need of improvement, and as representatives of the interests of doctoral researchers, we consider it our task to take part in the education and research reforms, to foster Germany's position as an internationally attractive location for study and research.

Research is an important part of the society. However, it is badly paid and unstable contracts, insufficient social protection, and poor work life balance prevail. Although there are already initiatives in science policy to make the working conditions of scientists more favorable (see [Traumjob Wissenschaft](#)), there is a lack of a larger lobby for doctoral researchers.

On the 26th - 27th June, the N² team met to prepare a common political statement and agenda at the [Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin](#). Among the topics of discussion was the analysis of important outcomes of our surveys ([Max Planck PhDnet](#) and [Helmholtz Juniors](#)) to identify key problems for doctoral researchers.



N² meeting on June 26 and 27, 2017. From left to right: Elias Eckert (alumnus), Konstantin Kuhne, Giulia Caglio, Leonard Borchert, Olga Naumov, Martin Schmidt, and Martin Grund (alumnus). Copyright: Elias Eckert.

Important goals defined during this meeting are:

- Reaching out to doctoral researchers of other non-university research institutions such as the *Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft* to enhance our political visibility
- Improving doctoral researchers' career development by demanding more opportunities for gaining transferable skills
- Establishing the idea of a lively transition between academia and non-academia through internships during the PhD
- Seeking 100% compensation for full-time work and genuine working contracts until PhD defense.

Feel free to [send us](#) your thoughts on this subject. What are your personal economic, educational and political concerns that affect your personal development or career? All data will be treated anonymously.

In March 2017 the Spokespersons of Max Planck PhDnet, Helmholtz Juniors and Leibniz PhD Network released the [official letter](#) to create a platform of "Network of Networks" called N². This platform will be a focal point to promote every topic concerning doctoral researchers.

Save the date: N² Science Communication Conference on 6-8 November 2017 in Berlin

Get the chance to learn from advanced scientists and experts in public media

The joint event of N² – the PhD networks Max Planck PhDnet, Helmholtz Juniors and Leibniz PhD Network – is meant to give an insight into state-of-the-art science communication as well as a possibility to explore new avenues without neglecting the past. How is the digital age changing the way we communicate science to society? How open is science itself and towards the public? To what extent does society rely on the expert knowledge of scientists?

Taking these questions as a landmark we want to celebrate a science festival with workshops, performances, exhibitions, talks, and presentations. The goal is to have an outreach to scientists by informing and encouraging doctoral researches to try new ways of communication.

About the N² logo:

Alexandra Fusinetti, graphical designer from the Sapienza Università di Roma, won the logo design contest. Each of the squares refers to one research organization (Leibniz Association, Max Planck Society, and Helmholtz Association). The color blue recalls trust and credibility, while magenta provides contrast and dynamism.



Practical information:

Conference date and venue:

The event will be held in Berlin from 6th to the 8th November at the [Leibniz Naturkundemuseum](#) and [EUREF Campus](#).

Contact:

n2event@gmx.de

Registration:

Opens in August

Registration fee: 50,00 €.

In case you have trouble covering the participation fee, please register for the limited number of travel grants.

Accommodation:

A hotel contingent will be provided for the duration of the conference. Hotel expenses have to be covered by the participants.

The registration fee for a regular participant includes:

Admission to the plenary sessions, symposia and workshops, entry to the Naturkundemuseum *Sauriersaal*, lunches, snacks and refreshments during breaks, registration for social events.

Survey on the situation of doctoral researchers in preparation

How do working conditions of doctoral researchers at Leibniz Institutes and Research Museums differ across sections? What are the methods of payment and how are work responsibilities and private life arranged? Do international doctoral researchers feel included at their institutes?

These are some questions the Leibniz PhD Network's „Diversity, Equal Opportunities, Working Conditions“ would like to address. For this purpose, the working group, with the full support of the Leibniz Association, has been preparing a draft questionnaire during the last month. When the work has been completed, each doctoral researcher at Leibniz institutes and research museums will be invited to participate in the survey. Similar to the [survey](#) done by the Helmholtz Juniors, the Leibniz PhD network aims to publish the results in a report – of course anonymously.

Leibniz Postdoc Initiative

More than one and a half years have passed since we started the planning to get doctoral researchers together and create the Leibniz PhD Network. Since then, we have accomplished many of our goals and reached already other ideas we never thought of achieving within just the first year since the founding of the network (such as: the preparation of a survey on the situation of doctoral researchers and the founding of N²; look at our [Facebook](#) and newsletter posts for more examples and details).

We are really happy that our advanced brothers and sisters are now taking the same step: early in 2017 some ten postdoctoral researchers met in Berlin to initiate a network of their own within the Leibniz Association. Their goals are quite similar to ours. Hopefully, their first meeting in Borstel in October will be as good as the one we had in 2016.