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**Excellent example of learning through research**

**University of Konstanz Society (UGK) and University of Konstanz establish Transfer Award: Public administration expert Ines Mergel selected to be the first laureate**

**Exceptional knowledge transfer activities should be commended: With the 2018 Transfer Award, the University of Konstanz Society (UGK) recognises public administration expert Professor Ines Mergel for her project on the digital transformation of public administration (“Digitale Transformation der öffentlichen Verwaltung”). Her teaching concept, which is implemented in collaboration with the City of Konstanz, has been commended as an exemplary instance of building bridges between science and society. The University of Konstanz Society’s Transfer Award, which is due to be awarded for the first time, recognises outstanding achievements in and extraordinary commitment to the three core areas of knowledge transfer: communication, advice and application. Together, they represent the three spheres of activity identified in the university’s institutional identity and vision regarding knowledge and technology transfer.**

Public administration is changing: Like many other public sector entities, the City of Konstanz faces the task of bringing its administrative processes and structures up to the galloping speed of digitisation. Professor Ines Mergel from the Department of Politics and Public Administration addressed this very real and pressing challenge in her seminar “Digitale Transformation der öffentlichen Verwaltung” (digital transformation of public administration). Her students analysed the current state of Germany’s public administration with regard to digitisation, identifying areas where the implementation of new technologies is fairly advanced and issuing recommendations for the adoption of appropriate strategies by the City of Konstanz. As a basis for discussion, these results helped shape the process of collaboration and exchange with administrative staff and local policy makers.

According to the Transfer Award jury, which is composed of professors and other transfer experts from the university and University of Konstanz Society, “all of this constitutes a prime example of research-driven learning”. The members of the jury deem Ines Mergel’s transfer project particularly successful “because her teaching concept addresses a practical problem – rather than approaching an external partner with an abstract topic, which is what usually happens”.

In the meantime, the City of Konstanz has hired an expert to coordinate its digitisation efforts, with demand for advice and services in this area rising. Recruiting a new seminar group and working closely with partners in Friedrichshafen, Ulm and Freiburg, Ines Mergel continued her project during the current summer semester: Each of these three cities named an administrative process due for digitisation that was then analysed by her students using expert interviews and consultations with local citizens. The University of Konstanz Society sees itself as a go-between connecting science and society. By establishing the Transfer Award, it pursues a particular goal: “We are convinced that the university, city and the entire region benefit from developing and growing in harmony with each other. This is why we are very pleased to be able to use this new award to highlight the important role that the university plays in making scientific insights available

in everyday contexts”, says Dr Michael Schwabe, vice-president of the University of Konstanz Society and CEO of ETO Gruppe.

**Facts:**

- University of Konstanz Society (UGK) and University of Konstanz establish new Transfer Award.
- The first laureate, Professor Ines Mergel from the Department of Politics and Public Administration, is recognised for a project entitled “Digitale Transformation der öffentlichen Verwaltung” (digital transformation of public administration).
- The Transfer Award acknowledges transfer activities in the areas of research and teaching that successfully build bridges between science and society.
- For her seminar project entitled “Digitale Transformation der öffentlichen Verwaltung”, Ines Mergel worked closely with the City of Konstanz.
- The Transfer Award is worth 3,000 euros and will be presented to Ines Mergel by the president of the University of Konstanz Society, Björn Graf Bernadotte, on Friday, 19 October 2018 during the Dies Academicus, which takes place in the University of Konstanz’s Audimax lecture theatre.

**Note to editors:**

You can download a photo here:

[https://cms.uni-konstanz.de/fileadmin/pi/filesserver/2018/Bilder/Transferpreis\\_Mergel.jpg](https://cms.uni-konstanz.de/fileadmin/pi/filesserver/2018/Bilder/Transferpreis_Mergel.jpg)

Caption: Prof. Dr. Ines Mergel

Photo: University of Konstanz

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