



Transfer
strategy at the
University of
Konstanz

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Preamble

The University of Konstanz is an internationally renowned university and research hub. Excellent research continuously produces new findings, knowledge and methods. The University of Konstanz's transfer activities aim to quickly put this information into practice and make it available to an audience outside the university, tailored to the relevant target group. Engaging in a lively, multidirectional exchange with a wide range of players in society, we incorporate current questions, impulses and needs from society into our research. In this way, our university contributes to society's capacity for reflection and renewal and fulfils its role in the social transformation process. The independence and freedom of research and teaching is essential and inviolable.

The University of Konstanz is a medium-sized reform university that shines with a broad range of disciplines, excellent communication, a high degree of interdisciplinarity, short distances and flat hierarchies on campus, including in the central administration. Right from the very beginning, institutional creativity and a strong emphasis on continuous renewal have been key features of the University of Konstanz. The university also benefits from its strong regional, national and international network. These factors contribute to its high degree of flexibility and innovation in transfer.

The University of Konstanz actively supports and shapes transfer as an integral component of its main tasks – research and teaching. A wide range of transfer activities in a great spectrum of transfer fields are already helping to connect the university and society.

This transfer strategy provides a corresponding framework for our partnership with society. It defines our joint understanding of transfer, describes central fields of action and formulates strategic goals in transfer, thus providing orientation on the way to a lively transfer culture that all university members share and shape.

Vision

As part of society, the University of Konstanz carries social responsibility. Based on excellent research and teaching, we contribute to addressing current social questions and challenges through the university's transfer activities. In mutual, lively exchange with players outside the university, knowledge and innovations are communicated quickly and widely, integrated into social development processes and put to use.

In addition, the university takes up problems from society and addresses them in its research and teaching. This dynamic exchange strengthens society's capacity for reflection and innovation and integrates current questions and the need for information from society into research and teaching.

Mission

With this vision in mind, the University of Konstanz's mission is:

- To realize an enabling and motivating culture in the area of transfer that fosters creativity, flexibility and interdisciplinarity at all career levels, while preserving the independence and freedom of research and teaching.
- To establish and expand connections between the university and players outside the university, promoting and shaping mutual exchange with all relevant social stakeholders in such a way that findings from excellent basic research, applied research and project-oriented teaching are made usable for society and can develop further in a lively dialogue with society.
- To activate the innovation cycles that arise from the close interaction between research, teaching and social impact and to develop their potential.
- To live up to our social responsibility and act as a reliable, open, interested and flexible partner and driver of innovation in the region as well as nationally and internationally.

Our understanding of transfer

We understand transfer as a reciprocal process between the world of research and players outside the university, in which research-based knowledge is communicated, applied and made effective, while impulses and needs from society are fed back into university research and teaching. We see transfer as a fundamental university responsibility that depends upon basic institutional prerequisites and an active transfer culture.

Fields and paths of transfer

For actively shaping this task, it is essential that all university members have a shared understanding of transfer. Based on the Stifterverband's transfer barometer¹, we cluster transfer activities for the University of Konstanz into the following transfer fields. These fields enable us to create corresponding structures and take targeted measures to promote transfer. Through prioritizing the first transfer field, the University of Konstanz has set itself a focus area of activity.

In the transfer field **research-based cooperation and utilization**, the focus is on the transfer of research results from all disciplines. This can involve collaboration partners from various areas of society who enter into a contractually formalized cooperation aimed at promoting utilization. This collaboration is intended to maximize the practical benefits as well as the social and economic added value of the research results. The aim is to transfer research results into practical application and generate concrete benefits for society. Examples of activities include collaborative research, contract research, services, IP management, innovation scouting and innovation marketing.

¹ www.stifterverband.org/transferbarometer

The transfer field **science communication** has the task of communicating the university's knowledge to society and making it available to the general public. This includes not only communicating research results, but also sharing knowledge about science and research, including research methods and processes, so we can strengthen public trust in science and research. A particular focus of this transfer field is on dialogue-oriented formats, as they enable direct exchange between researchers and people outside the academic community. This includes e.g. debate formats, conferences and other event formats such as Science Week, university courses for school children (Kinder-Uni), exhibitions, podcasts, blogs and social media activities, and the chemistry lab for school students (Schülerlabor).

The transfer field **transfer in teaching** goes beyond the mere application of acquired knowledge. By integrating transfer opportunities into study programmes, innovation cycles can be created between research and teaching that initiate and maintain dynamic knowledge development in exchange with non-academic players. Such transfer projects give students the option to revise or differentiate research questions as well as to pose entirely new questions in dialogue with external partners. Transfer-oriented teaching projects can also be embedded in research projects or can themselves be the impetus for research work: in particular the highly motivating transfer teaching projects repeatedly generate research questions for theses up to the doctoral level.

By providing research expertise and results, the focus in the transfer field **guidance through research** is on advising decision-makers in public and private institutions, or people who are directly or indirectly involved in the corresponding matter.

The aim is to provide them with scientifically sound guidance on specific topics. Advice can be offered both actively and on request. Examples of guidance activities are: preparation of expert opinions, statements, position papers etc.,

committee work, advisory assignments, participation or involvement in events, development and organization of information and exchange formats as well as the participation in such formats (e.g. parliamentary breakfasts/evenings, political hearings and visits).

Entrepreneurship as a transfer field includes both the application of one's own ideas, knowledge and research results for new, innovative business start-ups, as well as support through teaching start-up knowledge and entrepreneurial thinking skills for approaching problem-solving and design tasks. The underlying process leads from raising awareness for entrepreneurship to developing a concrete start-up concept through to market entry. This field also includes infrastructural support, such as the start-up centre in forum.konstanz, as well as networking with start-up ecosystems. In addition, options are offered to raise awareness for entrepreneurship among target groups, multipliers, decision-makers and managers, as well as to provide assistance with how to get ideas and develop them, e.g. ideas competitions, or of how to set up a corresponding team. The field also includes further support, coaching and advice on preparing for a start-up as well as applying for funding.

The transfer dimensions of the field **academic continuing education** provide access to the latest research content and methods for different target groups through stand-alone training concepts. Another aim is to provide training that can be completed while earning a qualification. In addition, academic continuing education courses can also be designed to complement one of the transfer fields listed here. The formats range from compact micro-credentials and adult education study programmes completed with a certificate to continuing education programmes leading to bachelor's and master's degrees. The cumulability and stackability of continuing education programmes is particularly important when they are part of developing a person's career biography.

Research and development with the participation of social stakeholders

includes collaborative projects with a focus on the common good, in which external partners are actively involved in the development of research questions and processes as well as solution approaches. Collaboration can provide important impetuses for research and teaching and enables the partners to play an active role in the process. The external partners may be from any area of society, such as non-profit organizations, municipalities, politics, companies or the culture sector. Special characteristics are the focus on the common good as well as the involvement and empowerment of external partners. Furthermore, performance exchange as well as the goal of utilization is not requested. Transfer paths include co-creation formats, citizen science formats, sandbox laboratories, transdisciplinary research projects and community-based research.

The transfer field **relationship management** focuses on building long-term, trusting relationships between people through fostering exchange and appreciation for each other, without binding this to specific projects. Activities aim at establishing a network that can serve as a basis for future transfer activities.

The transfer field **research infrastructure** comprises the provision, sale and use of special large-scale equipment, laboratories, workshops, libraries, archives, collections, software as a service, computing services, storage capacities, databases and data for users outside the academic community or commercial users. The aim is to provide users with access to infrastructure that they would otherwise not have, thereby contributing to the generation of added value. The specific infrastructure at the University of Konstanz includes our core facilities, forum.konstanz, the FabLab and the Library.

Our guiding principles for transfer

The University of Konstanz fulfils its transfer task responsibly as part of a global innovation process, based on the following principles:

- As a public institution, the University of Konstanz takes its obligation to act in the public interest seriously.
- The university supports and promotes transparency in the area of transfer, too, for example by naming its collaboration partners and funding bodies, provided there are no reasons to the contrary, and by consistently disclosing any dependencies.
- The University of Konstanz always guarantees the independence of research in all transfer activities. We have established special structures that ensure the autonomy of research and prevent any inappropriate influence by third parties.
- The University of Konstanz strives to establish and maintain long-term relationships with its collaboration partners. These relationships, in turn, help develop mutual trust, which is fundamental to the exchange of knowledge and expertise within the innovation process.
- In transfer, we apply general and ethical quality standards as well as strict guidelines to safeguard good research practice.

Organization

Transfer is important in all areas of university management. Our Vice Rector for Research, Innovation and Impact is responsible for coordinating and managing the transfer process. The Vice Rector is supported by the Staff Unit University Development, Research and Transfer. Staff in the units supporting the transfer activities cover a wide range of topics (see “fields and paths of transfer”) and thus promote the university’s diverse transfer and collaboration activities.

To supplement and fulfil this transfer strategy, corresponding operational measures are regularly devised and submitted to the Rectorate. The Staff Unit University Development, Research and Transfer coordinates this process.

There are other players near the university who make valuable contributions to the implementation of the transfer strategy. Especially the collaboration with partners from the regional innovation system and the options and experience they offer contribute to strengthening the university’s transfer culture.

Quality assurance and development

The University of Konstanz has a comprehensive quality management system that also covers the area of transfer. The quality management system and its components are described in detail in the quality management concept and documented in the quality management manual “Handbuch”².

The quality management system supports the transfer strategy and its implementation by specifying – based on a quality matrix – the quality objectives and criteria pursued in the area of transfer, and by evaluating them as part of the regular monitoring process.

² www.uni-konstanz.de/qualitaetsmanagement/qm-konzept