

## New Learning and Seminar Center Opened at KIT

Opening Ceremony with Minister of Science Theresia Bauer – Second Central Service Center for Students of this Type in Germany



Lord Mayor Frank Mentrup, Minister Theresia Bauer, KIT President Holger Hanselka, KIT Vice President Alexander Wanner, and Dominik Dürschnabel, Vermögen und Bau BW (from left to right). (Photo: Markus Breig, KIT)

**Open learning areas, seminar rooms, and laboratories under one roof. All this will be offered by the new Learning and Seminar Center on Campus South of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). The new building is designed to meet the requirements of learning and researching students. Today, the building was opened officially in the presence of the Baden-Württemberg Minister of Science Theresia Bauer.**

“Under the programs “Hochschule 2012” and “Master 2016”, the state of Baden-Württemberg created a total of 22,500 new studies places for freshmen and another 6,300 places for students starting master programs. With this, we want to give young people, who are eager to learn, the opportunity to attend a university. At KIT, we created 200 new studies places in chemical, biological, and bioengineering sciences. In close cooperation with the students’ representatives, we looked for possibilities of mitigating the shortage of space. The rooms that have been created for practical exercises, seminars, individual work, and teamwork with funds of the state

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represent an ideal place for high-quality education of students,” said Minister Theresia Bauer during the opening ceremony.

The utilization and building concept that also takes into account suggestions made by KIT students was set up by the Campus Development Service Unit. Under the direction of the State Ministry of Finance and Economics, the Karlsruhe Office for Assets and Construction in Baden-Württemberg supervised construction within the given time and budget limits. The Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts financed the construction costs of EUR 6 million under the development program “Hochschule 2012”. Both ministries quickly approved of the construction project in 2011 due to the novel approach pursued by the Center.

Professor Holger Hanselka, President of KIT, emphasized: “Research-oriented teaching is an important characteristic of studies at KIT. The new Learning Center is a place that supports students in learning, working, and conducting research and meets the special requirements associated with modern forms of scientific teaching and learning. At the same time, the Center provides students with room for exchange and with opportunities to retreat for relaxation. We would like to thank the state for this great support.”

The Lord Mayor of Karlsruhe, Dr. Frank Mentrup, said: “Without its universities and its more than 40,000 students, the city of Karlsruhe would only be half as fascinating. For Karlsruhe to remain an attractive location of science, the universities need to have a good infrastructure. For this reason, I am very happy about the new Learning Center that will considerably mitigate the shortage of rooms at KIT.”

A major element of the new Center is the open learning area that covers three floors. There, students can meet, discuss, and work. “The students are very pleased about the increase in learning space by more than 100 places for individual and group work and we hope that these places will be available to our students during the examination phase that will start soon,” said the Deputy Chairperson of the General Students Committee (AStA) at KIT. “Consideration of the wishes of students by a poll is a very positive example of participation at KIT. This policy should be continued.”

On the ground floor, the building planned by Reiner Becker Architekten, Berlin, accommodates a separable seminar room with a total of 58 places, a meeting and group room with 20 places, and a students’ lounge covering about 200 m<sup>2</sup>. On the first and second floors, one seminar room with 28 places each can be found. In addition, the building accommodates 94 workplaces for students. The seminar



*The new Learning and Seminar Center of KIT. (Photo: Markus Breig, KIT)*

rooms are open for lectures of all departments. In addition, the first floor accommodates a biological laboratory (60 places). A chemical laboratory, also with 60 places, can be found on the second floor.

The building also accommodates an object of art: The corresponding competition was won by the object "Continuity" by the artist Yoshiyuki Miura, Munich. His suspended column is located in the center of the atrium: 1,680 stainless steel ropes form a cuboid with twelve regular light-orange ellipses. The ellipsoids stand for the continuity of teaching and science.

The concept of the building follows that of the first European Learning Centre of the Sheffield Hallam University. After the Learning Center of Göttingen University, the Learning Center of KIT now is the second service center for students of this type in Germany. Energy efficiency of the building is of high importance: The primary energy consumption is 30 % below the value given in the Energy Saving Ordinance (Energieeinsparverordnung, ENEC) 2009. Among others, the building has an energy-optimized and long-lived brick facework. On the roof, photovoltaic systems can be installed.

**The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation according to the legislation of the state of Baden-Württemberg. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. Research activities focus on energy, the natural and built environment as well as on society and technology and cover the whole range extending from fundamental aspects to application. With about 9400 employees, including more than 6000 staff members in the science and education sector, and 24500 students, KIT is one of the biggest research and education institutions in Europe. Work of KIT is based on the knowledge triangle of research, teaching, and innovation.**

This press release is available on the internet at [www.kit.edu](http://www.kit.edu).

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*The objet d'art "Continuity", a freely suspended column, is located in the center of the atrium of the new Learning and Seminar Center of KIT. (Photo: Markus Breig, KIT)*