

KIT Expands Relationships into Silicon Valley

Kick-off for New Platform with an Event in San Francisco – An Item in the Program of the Official Visit of Minister President Winfried Kretschmann



Host Doug Garland, Vice President Thomas Hirth, alumnus Guido Appenzeller, Minister President Winfried Kretschmann, Minister Theresia Bauer, and alumnus Cyriac Roeding (from left to right, photograph: Jana Höffner / Baden-Württemberg Ministry of State)

KIT Link is a new platform by means of which the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) aims to further expand its good relations with universities, companies, and alumni in Silicon Valley. The starting signal was given on Tuesday evening (September 18, 2018, 5:30 p.m. local time) at an event in the San Francisco Bay Area. The event was part of the program of the official visit to the USA and Canada of Baden-Württemberg's Minister President Winfried Kretschmann, who was accompanied by Science Minister Theresia Bauer, among others.

On the launch of KIT Link, Minister President Winfried Kretschmann said: "KIT makes a decisive contribution to the fact that Baden-Württemberg is already the strongest research location for artificial intelligence in Germany. Curiosity, inspiration, and not least the clever networking of digital companies have created an extraordinary scientific institution of which we are justifiably proud. I am therefore particularly

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pleased to be at the launch of the KIT Zeitgeist Events and to accompany this unique platform for knowledge transfer and networking, which brings Silicon Valley and Baden-Württemberg even closer together."

Science Minister Theresia Bauer pointed out: "In the future, the new KIT Link platform will maintain existing relations with Silicon Valley and activate new ones through KIT's presence in Silicon Valley. Students, researchers, startups, and established companies will be addressed equally. I am confident that this will strengthen the visibility of the research location."

"The aim of KIT Link is to facilitate knowledge transfer in both directions through intensive exchange. The platform can thus be a valuable source of impetus for society and industry in Baden-Württemberg and Silicon Valley. Ideally, this will enable us to form partnerships to solve global issues of the future," KIT President Professor Holger Hanselka emphasizes.

"KIT Link stands for knowledge exchange and communication via minds," explains Professor Thomas Hirth, Vice President for Innovation and International Affairs at KIT. "With their curricula vitae and experience, the alumni of KIT in Silicon Valley can make a most relevant and important contribution." The aim of networking is to give partners on both sides direct access to current knowledge, innovative processes, and working methods. It is also planned that concrete cooperation between industry and science will be initiated and that KIT students will have more opportunities for internships. The platform is virtually located at SAP, a strategic partner of KIT that has a strong foothold in Silicon Valley.

The first KIT Zeitgeist event that took place on Wednesday kicked off a lively exchange with decision-makers and partners in civil society, politics, business, culture, and science in Silicon Valley: Cyriac Roeding and Guido Appenzeller talked about "Enterprising for a Better Globe: Silicon Valley Insights - Trends and Developments Ranging from AI to Health". The two alumni of KIT and successful entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley discussed with the representatives of the delegation as well as graduates of KIT living in the USA. Further Zeitgeist events in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Baden-Württemberg are planned. They will focus on topics such as digitization, artificial intelligence, robotics, and autonomous driving.

Being "The Research University in the Helmholtz Association," KIT creates and imparts knowledge for the society and the environment. It is the objective to make significant contributions to the

global challenges in the fields of energy, mobility and information. For this, about 9,300 employees cooperate in a broad range of disciplines in natural sciences, engineering sciences, economics, and the humanities and social sciences. KIT prepares its 25,500 students for responsible tasks in society, industry, and science by offering research-based study programs. Innovation efforts at KIT build a bridge between important scientific findings and their application for the benefit of society, economic prosperity, and the preservation of our natural basis of life.