

## Promoting a Lived Dual Career Concept

Chemical Engineer Heike P. Schuchmann is the New Gender Equality Officer of the University



The new gender equality officer Heike P. Schuchmann (Photo by: Jana Mayer)

**Professor Heike P. Schuchmann is the new gender equality officer of Universität Karlsruhe. The chemical engineer was elected unanimously during yesterday's meeting of the senate. Schuchmann, who was appointed to the University in 2004, conducts research and teaches at the Institute of Life Science Engineering. One of her objectives is the promotion of dual careers.**

"The KIT needs the largest possible pool of excellent heads, who deliberately decide in favor of the KIT and wish to work here in the long term", says the new gender equality officer. "Hence, we cannot afford to do without excellent female or male scientists." Many, well-educated couples rightly wish to have a family, which is also desired by society. According to Schuchmann, the right way to do this is a consistent and lived dual career concept that promotes dual careers and supports the professional development of both partners.

This includes a variety of supporting actions to individually plan family and career concepts. Schuchmann is convinced that such concepts have to cover all levels: They start with child care and do not end at the beginning of school time. It is also important to support students, Ph. D. students, post-docs, and scientists in the dualism of family and extensive education as well as to employ couples depending on their competences.

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“It will be my task in the next year to classify the many components of the current KIT gender equality concept in terms of importance, efficiency, and sustainability, to plan staff, time, and room capacities, to select target-oriented actions together with the president’s office, and to acquire the necessary funds”, says the new gender equality officer. According to her, it will also be important to find pragmatic solutions to support those, who are highly committed without losing sight of the scientific culture.

**Heike P. Schuchmann** studied chemical engineering and made her Ph. D. at the Universität Karlsruhe. She started her career in industry as a development engineer at BASF AG and as a project and group head of the Nestlé Product Technology Centre in Switzerland. With a post-doc grant of the DFG she returned to Universität Karlsruhe. A short time later, she was appointed head of the Institute of Process Technology of the Federal Research Institute of Nutrition and Food (today, Max Rubner Institute) in Karlsruhe. Since 2004, Schuchmann has been working as a professor of Food Process Engineering and spokeswoman of the Institute of Life Science Engineering of Universität Karlsruhe. Her field of work is the design of emulsion-based, extruded and dried products and model-based process and product design in the food sector.

**The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is the merger of the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, member of the Helmholtz Association, and the Universität Karlsruhe. This merger will give rise to an institution of internationally excellent research and teaching in natural and engineering sciences. In total, the KIT has 8000 employees and an annual budget of 700 million Euros. The KIT focuses on the knowledge triangle of research – teaching – innovation.**

**The Karlsruhe institution is a leading European energy research center and plays a visible role in nanosciences worldwide. KIT sets new standards in teaching and promotion of young scientists and attracts top scientists from all over the world. Moreover, KIT is a leading innovation partner of industry.**

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