

Bundestag continues to put its trust in KIT

“Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag” will be run by the Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis at KIT for a further five years



In the Marie-Elisabeth-Lüders House (right) in Berlin's government district, the current meeting venue of the Research Committee of the German Bundestag, TAB is introducing its projects. (Photo: TAB)

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) and its Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis (ITAS) have been commissioned again to run the Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag (TAB) for the next five years. This was decided unanimously by the Committee for Education, Research and Technology Assessment of the German Bundestag.

Commenting on the recommissioning of KIT, Dr Ernst-Dieter Rossmann, Chairman of the Committee for Education, Research and Technology Assessment, says: “All the factions agreed that TAB, which has been run by KIT and its Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis since 1990, should continue its highly appreciated and successful independent consulting activities for Parliament.”

Professor Armin Grunwald, Director of ITAS and TAB, says: “The trust that comes with the decision by the Research Committee is not least an indication of the visibility and acceptance that TAB has achieved.

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We look forward to providing options for action for Parliament early on, as in the past, by reviewing and assessing current and controversial social and technopolitical issues in a balanced, scientifically sound and understandable manner.”

The decision of the Bundestag to re-commission KIT applies to the period from September 1, 2018 through to August 31, 2023. During this time, the diverse know-how and resources from KIT and ITAS in terms of systemic relationships and technology impact will once again be used. At the same time, cooperation between TAB and the two partners, IZT – Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment gGmbH (Berlin) and VDI/VDE Innovation und Technik GmbH (Berlin), will be continued. With the help of new topic identification, analysis and event formats, TAB aims to identify options for action for Parliament even more precisely. In addition, the field of “dialog processes and discourse analyses” with which TAB addresses the Bundestag and the public will be further expanded and also deepened.

Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag

The Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag (TAB) is an independent scientific institution created with the objective of advising the German Bundestag and its committees on matters relating to research and technology. Since 1990, TAB has been run by the Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis (ITAS) at KIT. With its analyses of new scientific and technological developments and their impact on society, the environment and the economy, TAB contributes to informed decision-making of political leaders and the formation of public opinion beyond Parliament. Apart from the members and factions of the German Bundestag, its employees and parliamentary committees such as the Study Commissions, the federal and state ministries also take advantage of the Office’s work. There is also high demand from companies, authorities, research and educational institutions as well as from interested members of the general public.

TAB’s direct client is the Committee for Education, Research and Technology Assessment (Research Committee), which decides on suggested topics from specialized committees and factions in the German Bundestag in close collaboration with TAB. Here it is very important that the factions agree on the commissioning of TAB projects and the subsequent approval of reports provided by TAB. The number of committees for which TAB carries out reviews has increased significantly in the last few legislative periods.

TAB studies focus on energy, the environment, agriculture, green genetic engineering, biotechnology, medical technology, and, stepping up in recent years, the profound digitization of almost all areas of life. In addition, there will be reviews on innovation focal points, the strengths and weaknesses of Germany as a location, and current challenges in education, research, innovation and science. To deal with this variety of topics, a TAB team of ten experienced scientists is available from various disciplines (engineering, biology, physics, economics, philosophy, political sciences, sociology and futurology). Furthermore, expertise is available at IZT and VDI/VDE-IT as well as from external reviewers commissioned by TAB.

KIT is the contract partner of the German Bundestag for running TAB. The annual budget for TAB is approximately 2.6 million euros; this includes the contributions to the cooperation partners of TAB and the resources for the assignment of external reviews. TAB is a member of the German-speaking TA (NTA) network. As a founding member of the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment Network (EPTA), it also contributes to responsible innovation policy at European level.

Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis at KIT

The Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis (ITAS) at KIT researches scientific and technical developments in relation to systemic relationships and technology impact. ITAS develops and conveys knowledge and reviews, and devises action plans. Ethical, ecological, economic, social, political, institutional and cultural issues are at the center of its research. The main objectives of the scientists are to consult on research and technology policy, provide knowledge to create socio-technical systems, and implement discursive processes on unresolved questions and controversial techno-political issues.

As “the Research University in the Helmholtz Association”, KIT creates and conveys knowledge for society and the environment. The aim is to make significant contributions to global challenges in the fields of energy, mobility and information. To achieve this, around 9,300 employees are working together on a broad disciplinary basis in natural sciences, engineering, economics, humanities and social sciences. KIT offers research-oriented studies to prepare its 25500 students for responsible tasks in society, economy and science. Innovations at KIT bridge the

gap between knowledge and application for the benefit of society, economic prosperity and the preservation of our natural resources.

This press release is available on the internet at www.sek.kit.edu/presse.php

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