

## Press Release

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## Communication is Key for Responsible Research and Innovation

### Major Horizon 2020 project “NUCLEUS” investigates governance and cultures in scientific institutions to foster the science-society dialogue / 24 project partners from Europe, Asia and Africa

Kleve/Kamp-Lintfort, July 10, 2015: How should science respond to the needs of the people? How could a socially robust and responsible communication foster a genuine dialogue between, let's say a university and its stakeholders—whether politicians and entrepreneurs, artists and journalists, or citizens at large? How should scientific institutions deal with their new responsibilities in science communication in the face of the decreasing significance of legacy media and its role as branch within a system of checks and balances? Questions and challenges like these will be tackled by an international consortium of 24 partners in the course of an EU-funded four-year project, coordinated by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences in Cleves, Germany.

The project, which is budgeted with 4 million Euros, is called “NUCLEUS”, an acronym for a “New Understanding of Communication, Learning and Engagement in Universities and Scientific Institutions”. It is expected to start in September 2015.

“Our consortium is aware of how ambitious this project is”, says project leader Professor Alexander Gerber from Rhine-Waal, Germany. “It aims at nothing less than rethinking the very foundations of communication governance in institutionalised science.” The main goal, according to Prof. Gerber, is to find ways to align the communication structures and processes in science on the one hand with the expectations of policy-makers and civil society in the context of “Responsible Research and Innovation” (RRI) on the other. Thereby the rather complex paradigm of “RRI” is also expected to become more accessible to practicing scientists and to the general public.

NUCLEUS describes the scientific institutions as biological ‘cells’, in which the “Nucleus” represents the governance or the leading entity. In order to survive in a dynamic environment, these ‘Nuclei’ need to be appropriately interlinked with other cells around them, such as media, economy, public engagement, and policy. By investigating the links between these ‘cells’ and the obstacles which may hinder a proper upstream engagement in science, the project is expected to result in a widely-applicable ‘DNA’ for RRI, including 30 ‘test beds’ across Europe and a list of practical guidelines for higher education institutions and science-funding agencies. This ‘DNA’ will then form the basis of a living network to ensure the sustainability of the approach beyond the project timeline as well.

NUCLEUS is expected to contribute to the debate on science policy both on national and European levels, including the future design of Horizon 2020 and the European Research Area.

Further information can be found from September onwards under [www.nucleus-project.eu](http://www.nucleus-project.eu).

The project coordinator, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, is one of Europe's youngest universities and has been explicitly designed to be interdisciplinary and international. It runs Europe's only full-fledged Bachelor's degree in science communication.

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**The NUCLEUS consortium comprises the following partners:**

#### **Associations**

- Beijing Association for Science and Technology, BAST, China
- European Union of Science Journalists' Association, EUSJA, Finland
- European Science Events Association, EUSEA, Sweden

#### **Universities**

- University of Aberdeen, UK, Scotland
- Bielefeld University, Germany
- Ruhr University Bochum, Germany
- Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands
- Dublin City University, Republic of Ireland
- University of Edinburgh, UK, Scotland
- Ilia State University Tbilisi, Georgia
- Université de Lyon, France
- University of Malta, Malta
- Nottingham Trent University, UK, England
- Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (Coordinator), Germany
- University of Twente, The Netherlands

#### **Extramural Institutions**

- Mathematical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Serbia
- China Research Institute for Science Popularization, CRISP, China

#### **Networks and Municipalities**

- City of Bochum / UniverCity Network Bochum, Germany
- Nottingham City Council, UK, England
- Science City Hannover, Germany
- South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement, South Africa
- Wissenschaft im Dialog, Germany

## Science Communication Practice and Evaluation

- Psiquadro, Italy
- Science View, Greece

### Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences was founded on the 1st of May 2009 with the goal of providing young people from around the world with an innovative, international and interdisciplinary education. On its two campus locations in Kleve and Kamp-Lintfort in the picturesque Lower Rhine region of Germany, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences offers over 30 degree programmes at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, spanning four distinct faculties: Technology and Bionics, Life Sciences, Society and Economics, and Communication and Environment. Led by a dynamic staff of professors and lecturers, our degree programmes are characterised by a scientific, methodological and application-oriented approach. Some 85 percent of our programmes are taught in English, attracting students from all over the world: with a current enrolment of over 5,000 students – representing altogether more than 100 different nationalities – our campuses are alive with intercultural exchange. Our small class sizes, cutting edge facilities, high quality academics and research, and practically-oriented training come together to produce unique graduates who are well prepared for meaningful careers in local, national and international contexts

#### Press Contact:

Christin Hasken, M.A.  
Head of Press and Public Relations  
Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences  
Kleve Campus  
Marie-Curie-Straße 1  
D-47533 Kleve  
Phone: +49 (2821) 806 73-130  
E-mail: [christin.hasken@hochschule-rhein-waal.de](mailto:christin.hasken@hochschule-rhein-waal.de)  
Internet: [www.hochschule-rhein-waal.de](http://www.hochschule-rhein-waal.de)

**Hochschule Rhein-Waal**  
**Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences**  
[info@hochschule-rhein-waal.de](mailto:info@hochschule-rhein-waal.de)  
[www.hochschule-rhein-waal.de](http://www.hochschule-rhein-waal.de)

**Campus Kleve**  
Marie-Curie-Straße 1  
D-47533 Kleve  
Tel.: +49 (0) 28 21 / 806 73-0  
Fax: +49 (0) 28 21 / 806 73-160

**Campus Kamp-Lintfort**  
Friedrich-Heinrich-Allee 25  
D-47475 Kamp-Lintfort  
Tel.: +49 (0) 28 42 / 908 25-0  
Fax: +49 (0) 28 42 / 908 25-160