



Guiding Principle and Profile  
Abstract from the Development Plan

JLU 2020.2

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### **Guiding Principle and Profile**

Justus Liebig University Giessen (JLU), founded in 1607 as Ludoviciana, is the university with the longest continuity in the State of Hessen. When it was re-opened after the Second World War, its conception by the State of Hessen was as a model university of a new type, culminating in its re-establishment as a comprehensive university in 1957. Today it is the second largest university in Hessen and the largest in Central Hessen. JLU sees itself as an autonomous university which, on account of its history and significance, is strongly connected with the interests of the State of Hessen.

#### Justus Liebig

For centuries, JLU has blazed the trail in research, teaching and knowledge transfer. JLU's success has always stemmed from excellent achievements in research and, in consequence of these, from the awareness of the university's responsibility towards education, alongside intensive inter-institutional cooperation and international networking. The pioneering work in the 19<sup>th</sup> century of Justus Liebig, our eponymous university's famous scientist, was a testimony to these strengths and was a shining example of the ideals that inspire the university to this day: his excellent pure research linked to his vision of its application to the needs of society and to fields in numerous subjects, his revolutionary approach to teaching science by involving students in laboratory work and his ambition to establish a comprehensive international network.

#### Translating Science

The integrative core principle of Translating Science testifies to Liebig's tradition in the university's developmental planning. The term "translation" – also to be understood in the wider sense of transfer, imparting and exchange – describes central fields of action and goals of the university. By translating current and future challenges to society into scientific questions leading to interdisciplinary inquiry and reflection, the university is facing up to its social responsibility. The mission to impart profound knowledge and relevant skills is not only the educational principle guiding our students through research-intensive studies, but also characterises the university's personnel development with a focus on an optimal promotion of young researchers. Exchange and cooperation are not only an internal goal in interdisciplinary and close collaboration between scientists and other staff at JLU; they are also at the forefront of systematic networking on a regional, national and international basis with strong partners with a view to facing the global challenges of the future. Imparting and transferring knowledge to concrete societal and technological fields of application also confirm the university's commitment and contribution to society and lead to close co-operation with extra-mural partners.

#### Structures and pre-requisites

To achieve and implement these goals, we need structures and pre-requisites. University management and financial planning at JLU support and guarantee the goals in line with Translating Science. Moreover, development planning for infrastructure and building, and

last, but not least, the cross-sectional task of implementation and further development of established standards in gender equality and equal opportunities are all part of the structures and pre-requisites. In JLU's development planning for the coming years, the university can build on its rich historical traditions and on the success of the past years. Today, JLU already has a clear profile with defined contours in its foci in teaching and research.

JLU considers itself to be a differentiated comprehensive university. It offers a wide range of subjects organised in eleven faculties and comprising Law and Economics, Social Sciences, Cultural Studies and the Humanities, Psychology and Sport Science, Natural and Life Sciences, and Veterinary and Human Medicine. On the basis of this broad structure, for many years the university has been successfully developing the two Profile Zones Cultural Studies and Life Sciences. As a result of a number of joint projects since the 1990s – e.g. collaborative research centres, research groups and graduate schools – JLU was able to lay the foundations in both profile zones for successful applications in the two rounds of the Excellence Initiative of the German federal and state governments. Since 2006, the Excellence Initiative has funded the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) and the Excellence Cluster Cardio-Pulmonary System (ECCPS, in collaboration with the Max Planck Institute at Bad Nauheim and Goethe University Frankfurt). This funding has enabled both profile zones to develop and produce new projects alongside areas of teaching and research of particular prominence. Successful interdisciplinary profile development in both zones has emerged from close cooperation between the respective faculties and the involvement of pertinent JLU academic centres.

In the Profile Zone Cultural Studies, JLU has built up an innovative and exemplary structure for research-intensive post-graduate studies since 2001 at the Giessen Graduate Centre for Humanities (GGK) and with funding from the State of Hessen. The pioneering work and success of the first structured post-graduate programme in Germany was rewarded by the establishment of the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) in the framework of the Excellence Initiative. GGK and GCSC form a nucleus for the cultural studies research profile of JLU and the promotion of early-career researchers in this area by acting as an interface to connect and combine the subject areas and competences of three faculties (FB 03: Social Sciences and Cultural Studies, FB 04: History and Cultural Studies, FB 05: Language, Literature and Culture). The picture is completed by the involvement of the following JLU academic centres. The Giessen Centre for East European Studies (GiZo) was founded in 2006. As a result of the State of Hessen ordaining a concentration of the small subjects in the humanities connected to regional studies, the centre combines teaching and research on east Europe. The development of the centre was rated by the German Council of Science in 2010 as exemplary and excellent. The Centre for Media and Interactivity (ZMI) is an interdisciplinary research centre concerned with the academic media-cultural perspective on interactive digital media in science, society and politics. The Centre for Competence

[Differentiated  
comprehensive university](#)

[Profile Zones Cultural  
Studies and Life Sciences](#)

[Success in the Excellence  
Initiative](#)

[Profile Zone Cultural  
Studies](#)

Development (ZfbK) was founded in 2010 to intensify the translational perspective of subjects in the area of cultural studies. Finally, the Institute of Applied Theatre Studies with its international renown contributes to the distinctive profile of Giessen cultural studies. The sustainable development of the JLU Profile Zone Cultural Studies will continue beyond the Excellence Initiative funding period. Not only will the GCSC be perpetuated as an outstanding graduate school, but the academic centres will continue to be developed.

### Profile Zone Life Sciences

In the Life Sciences, JLU has a unique constellation of subjects admirably suited to Human-kind – Nutrition – Environment, the research activities supported by the State of Hessen in the framework of interdisciplinary collaboration in bio-medicine and agricultural, nutritional and ecological sciences. In this context, the animal and plant resources needed by humans now and in the future with the environment we live in are the focus at the Center for International Development and Environmental Research (ZEU), the LOEWE<sup>1</sup> Center Insect Biotechnology (ZIB) and in the sphere of climate change research in the LOEWE Focus Group FACE-2FACE. In the field of medicine, JLU in collaboration with Philipps-Universität Marburg and the privatised and merged University Hospital Giessen and Marburg (UKGM) represents the third-largest university hospital in Germany. It is not only the Excellence Cluster Cardio-Pulmonary System (ECCPS) in the framework of the Excellence Initiative that underscores the excellent level of research in university medicine at Giessen. The LOEWE Centre Universities of Giessen and Marburg Lung Center (UGMLC), of which the Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research Bad Nauheim is a participant, is also the site of the German Center for Lung Research (DZL). In collaboration with Marburg and Langen, Giessen is likewise the partner site of the German Centre for Infection Research (DZIF). Giessen scientists are also involved at the Rhine/Main partner site of the German Centre for Cardiovascular Research (DZHK). JLU is thus in three of a total of six German Centres for Health Research funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Moreover, JLU works in three medical DFG Collaborative Research Centres (two of which JLU heads), and three other medical research foci are funded by the LOEWE programme. Promotion of early-career researchers in the Life Sciences is supported by the International Giessen Graduate Centre for the Life Sciences (GGL), which offers a structured post-graduate programme spanning a number of faculties to realise interdisciplinary top research in the fields of human medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, psychology, biology, chemistry, nutritional and agricultural sciences. Thanks to the full exploitation of the excellence potential possessed by university medicine in Central Hessen and attested by the Council of Science in 2010, JLU will secure and sustain its position as one of the leading universities in Germany in the field of medicine. The Profile Zone Life Sciences at JLU will continue to grow and flourish in future with the

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<sup>1</sup> LandesOffensive zur Entwicklung Wissenschaftlich-ökonomischer Exzellenz (Hessian State Programme for Developing Scientific-Economic Excellence)

support of cooperation projects with strong partners. Giessen is also planning to set up a Fraunhofer Research Establishment for insect biotechnology.

The profile zones are embedded in the Portfolio of the Humanities and Natural Sciences of JLU as a comprehensive university, a portfolio distinguished by traditionally strong and very dynamically and successfully developing subjects. The historically trail-blazing role of JLU in Psychology (JLU is one of the founding establishments of modern Experimental Psychology) and Chemistry (Liebig founded modern Organic Chemistry in Giessen) persists to this day in these especially research-intensive subjects. But also internationally oriented Law, Hadron and Heavy Ion Physics visible across national borders, Materials Science or pure research into electromobility are examples of the strength of the university and the scope of its subjects. JLU will continue to enhance its contours as a differentiated comprehensive university and pursue the fertile development of the full range of its subjects alongside – and in interdisciplinary combination with – the two Profile Zones Cultural Studies and Life Sciences.

[Portfolio of the Humanities and Natural Sciences](#)

An interdisciplinary profile feature of JLU is teacher training, which involves nine out of the eleven faculties, thereby almost covering the complete JLU portfolio. JLU is the only university in Hessen which offers all five types of teacher training in full; more than 20% of JLU students are studying for a teaching degree. Special achievements in teacher training, typified by many awards in the framework of the Hessian University Prize for Excellence in Teaching, testify to JLU's goal of taking the lead in Hessen. Giessen's teacher training, coordinated by the Centre for Teacher Training (ZfL) and quality assured, combines theory with practice and encourages students to reflect on their own actions. It accepts current societal challenges, e.g. by introducing the first degree programme for training teachers of Islamic Religion in Hessen. Another guiding principle in teacher training is cooperation and networking, both in schools and at an international level. To fulfil the guiding principles and meet the needs of a pluralistic society, the focus in JLU's teacher training is on lifelong learning. In future, activities which link the most diverse phases of teacher training will be further expanded and empirical teaching and educational research will be systematically intensified.

One of the national and international features of JLU is also the promotion of early-career researchers. This begins at the undergraduate level. Following the ideal of the union of teaching and research, students are involved in research activities even at an early stage of their degree programmes. It is our endeavour not to regard students as recipients (or even as passive consumers) of teaching, but as independent and responsible learners participating actively in the teaching and studying process. A large number of teaching awards, high satisfaction testified by student questionnaires and class evaluations, rising graduate quotas and sinking dropout quotas confirm JLU's commitment and ambition in this regard. JLU has also always been a pioneer in postgraduate education and seen it as a duty to support young researchers in their academic careers and offer them networks. Apart from the above-men-

[Promotion of early-career researchers](#)

tioned structured PhD programmes in the Profile Zones Cultural Studies and Life Sciences (GGK, GCSC, GGL), the Giessen Graduate Centre for Social Sciences, Business, Economics and Law (GGS), opened in 2012, offers PhD and post-doctoral students in the appropriate faculties a platform for interdisciplinary exchange and collaboration in research and further training. JLU is committed to a future continuation and intensification of promotion of early-career researchers, an important profile feature. Not only will the graduate centres be further developed and their networking intensified; in light of the nationwide discussion of opportunities for early-career researchers to plan their career paths, JLU wants to devote its broad experience to developing concepts for the post-doc phase in order to offer the perspective of an academic career leading to a professorship or other professional goals.

#### Personnel development

Promoting early-career researchers is embedded in systematic personnel development, which is to be enhanced and reinforced in the coming years. This development must take account of new external challenges to the university as an organisation, such as a growing autonomy with changing competencies, more competition between the universities and the demographic change, to name but a few of the topics to be considered in personnel planning. It will be JLU's endeavour to develop a concept geared to the needs of the university as a whole.

#### Gender equality

Nearly two-thirds of students at JLU are women. As a consequence, the university has a long-term responsibility to promote women at all levels of qualification and leadership where women are underrepresented. The mission is to promote gender equality and, at the same time, make use of the talents and abilities of women for the benefit of the university. Thanks to JLU's gender equality concept, the university was successful in securing funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in the Professor Programmes I and II. The measures stemming from the concept have been systematically implemented since 2009. In 2013, the German Research Foundation (DFG) certified JLU's high success in achieving the Research-oriented Gender Equality Standards and ranked JLU as one of the top universities in Germany in this regard. To take the development further, JLU presented its gender equality policy to the Center of Excellence Women and Science (CEWS), whose assessment will guide the university in enhancing the policy systematically on the grounds of a revised and advanced gender equality concept.

#### Networks

Following the guiding principle of Translating Science, JLU is systematically expanding its internal and external networks. Internal networks are flourishing not only in the Profile Zones Cultural Studies and Life Sciences, but also at interdisciplinary research centres and in interdisciplinary study programmes. In the region, JLU has excellent connections and collaborates closely with university and non-university partners. JLU has the privilege of an excellent location: Not only is JLU the largest educational establishment in Central Hessen and thus a central actor in the region, but it is in a position to make the most of research, business and



infrastructural networks of the polycentric metropolitan region of Frankfurt/Rhine-Main to which it belongs. With respect to the concept of regional cooperative research, further development of the cooperation agreement between the three Central Hessian universities and the Research Alliance between the universities of Giessen and Marburg is crucial. In the Research Alliance, the two historic research universities have been pooling their strengths since 2012 and are a driving force alongside their partners in the development of Central Hessen as a research and educational region. Soon after the establishment of the Research Alliance, the partnership was quick to achieve success. For example, funding for three joint collaborative research centres and other large joint projects was secured. The regional network will lead to the establishment of the Research Campus of Central Hessen, which will expand with the support of non-university research institutions. Strategic development planning will have a major focus on regional cooperative research with strong partners in the coming years, also with regard to possible new formats succeeding the Excellence Initiative.

Regional cooperative  
research

Close cooperation with non-university research institutions is of great importance to JLU, such as with the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe - Institute of the Leibniz Association in Marburg, the Max Planck Institutes in Marburg and Bad Nauheim, the German Aerospace Center (DLR), the Helmholtz Association and the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft [Society]. The goal is sustainability and expansion of such cooperation alongside the strategy of establishing non-university research institutions in the region. For example, plans have been laid for the LOEWE Centre HIC for FAIR, whose researchers collaborate with the universities of Frankfurt and Darmstadt, the Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies and the Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung (GSI) [Heavy Ion Research] in the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres, to receive permanence as a joint Helmholtz Institute at three sites (Darmstadt, Frankfurt/Main and Giessen) after the expiry of Hessian state funding. The successful cooperation between JLU, Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen [University of Applied Sciences] and the Fraunhofer Institute for Molecular Biology and Applied Ecology IME (Aachen) in the framework of the LOEWE Center for Insect Biotechnology is leading to an independent Fraunhofer Institute with new facilities in Giessen. Collaboration with the German Aerospace Center (DLR) is to be developed to become a strategic partnership. A branch of the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe - Institute of the Leibniz Association is also being planned at JLU. The Herder Institute already works closely with the GiZO and ZMI research centres at JLU.

Cooperation with  
non-university research  
institutions

As a strong network partner, JLU is of considerable significance to the structural development in Hessen. Working with partner institutions in Central Hessen and the metropolitan region of Frankfurt/Rhine-Main, JLU not only puts joint research to the fore, but also promotes knowledge and technology transfer to society and industry. JLU helps businesses to be set up in the framework of the Entrepreneurship Cluster Mittelhessen (ECM), which was established with Philipps-Universität Marburg and Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen

Knowledge and  
technology transfer

(University of Applied Sciences). The translational potential of putting scientific findings into practice is also supported by TransMIT, the company for technology transfer administered by the three Central Hessian universities and now the most successful patent exploitation company in Germany. JLU will continue to promote collaboration at the interface between science and industry, for example by establishing a representation at the House of Logistics and Mobility (HOLM) and by participating in the House of Pharma & Health Care.

### Internationalisation

Close cooperation and fruitful partnerships characterise not only JLU's networking in the region, but also beyond borders. Internationality is at the core of JLU's image; internationalisation has been significant for a very long time. This is exemplified not only in JLU's great success in receiving funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), e.g. for CEMarin in Colombia, which is one of only four international DAAD Centers of Excellence for Research and Teaching to be funded worldwide. JLU also works in a comprehensive network with universities and institutions all round the world. It has strategic partnerships and cooperation and exchange agreements with around 70 universities in Europe and overseas. On top of this, there are connections to about 210 ERASMUS partner universities in Europe. Students and teachers also benefit from Hessian state partnerships with 18 universities in North America and nine universities in Australia. JLU's international approach is visible on campus – ten per cent of students at JLU are international and more than 25 per cent of postgraduates come from abroad. In 2010, JLU was the only Hessian university to take part in the internationalisation audit conducted by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), which certified that in view of previous achievements, JLU had the potential to continue on the path towards a pioneering future and international success. JLU was the first university in Germany to participate in the internationalisation re-audit in 2013. The conclusion testified to JLU's successful internationalisation and the likelihood of its developing into a model university of internationalisation visible in Europe and worldwide. Future through internationalisation is a core message at JLU, in keeping with the mission of Justus Liebig. JLU will publish and implement a new internationalisation strategy on which its institutional future development will be founded.

### Building plans

For a sustainable future for the university, building plans are of strategic importance. Within the framework of university and town planning, JLU's building development strategy was evaluated by the architects Albert Speer and Partners in 2014. On the basis of this and the stipulations coordinated with the State of Hessen, e.g. in the framework of the continuation of the Consilium Campus Development Giessen and an update of the HIS University Information System study on the area for university premises (an update deemed necessary by JLU), the focus will be on the following strategic objectives. There will be three campuses: Natural and Life Sciences, Cultural Studies and the Humanities, and Town Centre. Related subjects will be grouped together in certain areas of a campus; central administration will be in the University Centre area on the Town Centre campus. The campus areas will be well

linked by roads and paths. JLU will become more of a focus in the town, for example by means of improved signposting. Modernisation of and improvements to existing buildings will be intensified to meet energy-saving requirements.

The University Pact (HSP) 2016-2020 offers JLU a positive and stable perspective for its financial planning in the next few years. In view of the “debt brake” and the expiry of HSP 2020 funding at the end of 2020, JLU aims at making the most of its options to secure current structures and develop its performance potential in strategically important areas for the future. JLU will exploit the opportunities granted to universities by global budgets, considerable financial autonomy and in particular the chance to accrue reserves. The management of reserves will become a strategic instrument and control option in budgeting, linked to other instruments, such as medium-term financial planning, internal target agreements, risk management, annual budget planning. This will take place in the framework of a continuous development of instruments, models and processes in university management and the administration structure of JLU.

[University management  
and financial planning](#)

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