Research Forum Berlin 2016:

*Opportunities for German Australian Research Cooperation*

**SUMMARY**

**Dr. Hans-Jörg Stähle, International Bureau, Federal Ministry of Education and Research:**

Overview Australian Research Landscape

In his presentation Dr. Hans-Jörg Stähle gave a comprehensive introduction to the Australian research landscape. He presented facts and figures which depicted research as a defining characteristic of Australia’s universities. In terms of international research collaboration he emphasized on the already strong linkages between Australia and Germany. After the US and the UK Germany is the third most important research partner.

**Professor Anja Schwarz, Member of the Australia Germany Advisory Group:**

Strengthen cooperation in Science and Education - Recommendations of the *Australia Germany Advisory Group*

Prof. Anja Schwarz introduced shortly the history of the *Australian Germany Advisory Group*, which got established end of 2014 to examine ways to develop closer relationships between the two countries.

In their report *Collaboration, Innovation & Opportunities* the group, comprising senior leaders from business, academia, and the arts listed 59 recommendations across five themes:
trade and investment
- strategic dialogue
- science and education
- diversity and integration
- culture and sport

In her very lively and poignant speech Prof. Anja Schwarz concentrated on the most representative points within the 59 recommendations concerning “Science and education”: increase collaboration on innovation and commercialization, explore opportunities to increase student exchanges between Australia and Germany with a strong focus on improving scholarship options and intensify ongoing and sustained conversations on science, research, education and training.

**Felicity Jones, European Research Development Manager University of Melbourne**

**How to make the right friends in the Great Southern Land**

Coming from a very practical background Felicity Jones described the different parameters of successful initiating long term ongoing research relationships. While financing issue soon are a much discussed problem (here she listed a wide range of international funding) and very often an obstacle not to even start the whole process she finally strongly pushed the idea of creativity and perseverance as key factors of a successful development of research cooperations.

**Beate Pasch, DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service):**

**The Universities Australia - DAAD Research Co-operation Scheme (PPP Australien)**

After a short introduction into the administrative structures of the DAAD, Beate Pasch focused on a short history of the co-operation scheme, referring to the first partner arrangement with the *Group of Eight* in 2006 followed by a partner agreement with the *ATN universities* in 2010. The benefits of a national counterpart she discussed within the new **The Universities Australia - DAAD Research Co-operation Scheme**. She described the co-operation scheme as a bilateral research mobility funding program

- to finance mobility within a joint research project of high quality
- with a strong focus on supporting early career researchers
- with a necessity of complementarity and reciprocity of the research of the participating partners
- intended as initial funding for further international funding schemes, duration in general limited to 2 years
Aims are to

- foster research collaboration of the highest quality between Australian researchers from participating Universities Australia member universities and German researchers from German universities, research institutes and universities of applied sciences
- produce research outcomes and the exchange of skills and knowledge of mutual benefit to Australia and Germany.

Best case studies:

Prof. Andreas Meinhardt, Deputy Director of the Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology at Justus-Liebig University Giessen presented the successful International Research Training Group (IRTG) Molecular Pathogenesis of Male Reproductive Disorders between Monash University and Giessen University. The project is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Monash University. When established in 2012 it was the first IRTG in collaboration with an Australian partner, featuring cooperative research between the two universities, structured cross-border scientific qualifications and promotion of young researchers.

Prof. Christian Kurts, Director of the Institute of Experimental Immunology at Bonn University, introduced his IRTG with University of Melbourne, dubbed 'Bo&MeRanG' – the Bonn & Melbourne Research and Graduate Training Group. This German-Australian doctoral training group is only the second of its kind funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) with up to 5 million AUD. The financial support from the DFG and Melbourne University will go towards a joint PhD program for up to 30 students across both institutions. The researchers will focus on deciphering how certain types of immune cells, the so-called myeloid cells, contribute to the body’s defense against infections.

Dr. Luis Meijas Alvarez, Deputy Director of the Australian Research Centre for Aerospace Automation (ARCAA) at Queensland University of Technology spoke on different research collaboration models of his university with diverse university, research institutions and industry partners in Germany. The strong focus here is engineering, mathematics, sciences and emerging technologies. Collaboration models involve staff exchange, teaching & learning, postgraduate training among others. The broad range of funding mechanisms also shows the well established research links with Germany: DAAD - German Academic Exchange Service, NIRAP - National and International Research Alliances Program, Erasmus+ European Commission and FP7-PEOPLE-IRSES - International Research Staff Exchange Scheme.

We are happy to send you the power point presentations. For more information on German funding opportunities of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) or the German Research Foundation (DFG) please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Michaela Krug von Vacano

krug@gostralia.de