

## U15 CANADA AND GERMAN U15 JOINT STATEMENT

### A NEW LEVEL OF STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

We, the associations of leading Canadian and German universities, met for the first time in Ottawa, Canada for a two-day bilateral exchange. At our meeting, we resolved to take our existing collaboration to a new level and establish a long-term strategic partnership. This partnership is intended to both strengthen the cooperation of our associations in science and research policy and to also provide a platform for deeper cooperation among our member universities.

The envisaged cooperation is in line with more than 50 years of close scientific cooperation between Germany and Canada, e.g. in the fields of environmental, earth and agricultural sciences, health sciences, information and communication technologies. As an important mechanism to support this partnership, we welcome the positive state of negotiations between the European Union and Canada for an association to Horizon Europe and eagerly anticipate a successful agreement.

### WHY WE WANT TO WORK MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER

Living in times of challenging upheaval and uncertainty, we see our universities as having a vital role to strengthen democratic societies in their capacity to shape their future in a self-determined, free and successful way: Through excellent research; by educating the next generations of talented professionals and leaders; through innovation and the dissemination of knowledge; and by being equally places for the pursuit of ideas and societal self-reflection and self-debate. Universities realize their potential in these areas and deliver value to societies through the transfer of ideas and talented people when they cooperate internationally. Cooperation between universities from countries with shared values has a special role to play building a successful, prosperous and inclusive future.

At the same time the framework conditions for top universities are changing, too: Universities want to become climate-neutral, shape disruption through artificial intelligence, and advance diversity and fairness in academic careers. They are navigating evolving threats to the security of research activities and pursuing new opportunities to publish and communicate their discoveries to the public. Policymakers are formulating new expectations and introducing new tools for funding and governing universities. Science is becoming more geopolitical, with disinformation campaigns and attacks on evidence-based decision-making and debate processes on the rise. These challenges are inherently international. Against this backdrop, mutual learning from one another and the joint formulation of political positions by our associations is more important than ever.

### NEXT STEPS

We have agreed on the following activities as first steps on the way to intensifying our collaboration:

- Deepening exchanges between the associations, including exchange of information and best practices on challenges at top universities in science policy developments in both countries.
- This exchange is the basis for collegial consultation and, where appropriate, the joint formulation of science policy positions. A first key topic is the role of universities on the pathway to a climate-neutral society.
- The increased establishment of networking formats for member universities in various fields of cooperation.