



The mission continues

TU Darmstadt and the European Space Agency conclude cooperation agreement

Darmstadt, April 26, 2019. TU Darmstadt and the European Space Agency (ESA) will in future be cooperating even more closely. TU President Professor Hans Jürgen Prömel and ESA General Director Professor Johann-Dietrich Wörner have signed a corresponding “Memorandum of Collaboration”.

“Two ideal partners are coming together here to bundle their outstanding research and application expertise in future areas of digital transformation”, TU President Prömel commented on the agreement. “In so doing, TU Darmstadt is also intensifying its cooperation with ESOC, the European Space Agency’s satellite control centre, that has been ongoing for more than three years.”

“For ESA the cooperation with TU Darmstadt is of major importance for giving additional impetus to the entire innovation chain from basic research through to space missions”, Johann-Dietrich Wörner, ESA General Director, emphasised.

One of the initial projects in the future research laboratory “ESA_Lab@TU Darmstadt” in the area of mechanical engineering will address the issue of “concurrent engineering”, interdisciplinarily integrated product development that is reduced in terms of both space and time. The memorandum aims to not only reinforce space-relevant research and development as well as transfer activities and networking but also generate new course content for students and organise joint scientific conferences. The cooperation is designed as an open platform in which further European partners from science and business can participate. A steering committee comprising equal numbers of representatives from the two institutions including members of management will provide the cooperation with strategic support over the next five years.

Close collaboration with ESA-control centre

TU Darmstadt and the European satellite control centre ESOC have been pushing ahead with joint teaching and research in practical aerospace travel issues on the basis of a contractual agreement since December 2015. The focus here is on areas such as small satellites, space technologies, innovative IT systems and scientific missions in the field of space security.

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Reinhold Bertrand, jointly responsible for strategies and innovation at ESA Darmstadt, has been in the post of cooperation professor at the Institute of Flight Systems and Control Technology in TU Darmstadt's mechanical engineering department since 2018. His main area of expertise is the design, construction and simulation of complex aerospace systems using digital methods. He also collaborates closely with the IT department, notably with the robotics and autonomous systems groups.

The physical geodesics and satellite geodesics group, the Institute of Microwave Technology and Photonics and the Institute of Technical Thermodynamics at TU Darmstadt have also been cooperating closely with ESA in joint international research projects for years. The university has moreover produced several successful start-up companies that have established themselves in the vicinity of the ESOC centre and work in areas such as the innovative applications of satellite navigation or geoinformation.

Last but not least, the student university group "TU Darmstadt Space Technology" also has a keen interest in aerospace and networks closely with ESA. The group is developing and constructing its own rockets as well as a nano-satellite for a space mission.

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About TU Darmstadt

The Technische Universität (TU) Darmstadt is one of Germany's leading technical universities. TU Darmstadt incorporates diverse science cultures to create its characteristic profile. The focus is set on engineering and natural sciences, which cooperate closely with outstanding humanities and social sciences. We are enjoying a worldwide reputation for excellent research in our highly-relevant, focused profile areas: cybersecurity, internet and digitalisation, nuclear physics, fluid dynamics and heat- and mass transfer, energy systems and new materials for product innovation. We dynamically develop our portfolio of research and teaching, innovation and transfer, in order to continue opening up important opportunities for the future of society. Our 312 professors, 4,450 scientific and administrative employees and close to 26,000 students devote their talents and best efforts to this goal. Together with Goethe University Frankfurt and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, TU Darmstadt has formed the strategic Rhine-Main Universities alliance.

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