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The Volkswagen Foundation manages an endowment fund of around €3.1 billion. Each year it grants funding in excess of €100 million, making it Germany’s largest private science funding organization.

The objective pursued by the Foundation is to provide support for the development of science and technology in the areas of education and research. It also comes to the aid of scientific institutions seeking to improve the structural conditions for their work. The Foundation places a high priority on the advancement of junior researchers and cooperation beyond the boundaries of disciplines and national borders.

The Foundation is economically self-sufficient and completely independent in its decision making. Funding is equally available to the social sciences and the humanities as well as the natural sciences, engineering, and medicine.

Since it was founded more than 50 years ago, the Volkswagen Foundation has allocated more than €4.7 billion in support of over 31,000 projects.

www.volkswagenstiftung.de
The International Centre for Higher Education Research-Kassel (INCHER-Kassel)

The International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (INCHER-Kassel) is an interdisciplinary research unit of the University of Kassel, Germany. It is one of the few research institutes at universities in Europe that is large enough to investigate questions of higher education and society from a broad range of different perspectives.

Research at INCHER-Kassel is addressed in four thematic areas:

- Change of Knowledge Production
- Students and Graduates
- Governance and Organization
- Innovation and Transfer

Additionally, cross-cutting issues such as globalization and social inequality have significance in all four areas.

At INCHER-Kassel the promotion of young researchers has high priority. A team of about 50 persons work at the Centre, consisting of professors, senior academic staff, research associates, non-academic staff, doctoral students and student assistants.

Its founding director, Ulrich Teichler, as well as its current director, Georg Krücken, are both members of Academia Europaea.

www.uni-kassel/incher.de
Higher Education, Research and CULTure in European Society (HERCULES) group of the Academia Europaea

The group was formally established in 2004 to identify and deliver initiatives relevant to the practices of higher education, research and cultural scholarship at the European level. The focus is always on interdisciplinary topics of broad interest, including preparation of research policy and practice statements on behalf of the Council of the Academia Europaea.

Core members of the group at the time of the Hannover Symposium included:

Coordinator: Erik de Corte (Education, Leuven, B)

The online version of previous publications from the HERCULES (Wenner Gren) International series, can be accessed via the hypertext links in the titles below.
Other symposia have been published either in the European Review (see below) or as indicated.
Initiatives since 2000:

○ ‘Formative Years of Scholars’ (with the Wenner Gren Foundation), 2005 Stockholm.
○ ‘Quality Assessment in Institutions of Higher Education in Europe: Problems, Practises and Solutions’ (with the Compagnia di San Paolo), 2006, Pavia. ISBN 978 1 855781719
○ ‘From Information to Knowledge, from Knowledge to Wisdom: Challenges Facing Higher Education in the Digital Age’ (with the Wenner Gren Foundations), 2009, Stockholm.
○ ‘Migration and Mobility in Science: Impacts on Cultures and the Profession in Institutions of Higher Education in Europe’ (with the Compagnia di San Paolo and Accademia dei Lincei), 2013, Rome. European Review 23.1 Supplement.
○ ‘Humanities and Social Sciences, Globalization, and China’ (a bilateral event with Tsinghua University, Beijing, and sponsored by the Riksbanken Jubileumsfonds, Stockholm), 2014, Beijing. European Review 24.2.
○ ‘Conflicts and Dialogues between Science and Humanities’ (a bilateral event with Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai), 2015. In Press, European Review 26.2.

Pre-2000 linked events

- ‘New Challenges for the Academic Profession’ (with the Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies, Twente University), 1996, Rotterdam.
- ‘High Bandwidth for European Education and Research’ (with HiBeer and The European Science Foundation), 1999, Uxbridge.
- ‘The “Virtual University” ’ (with the Wenner Gren Foundation), 1999, Stockholm.
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