



Friedrich-Alexander-Universität  
Erlangen-Nürnberg



# Moving knowledge. developing talents.

Principles for supporting and developing  
early career researchers at FAU

## Introduction...

At FAU, we are committed to recruiting top-level researchers from all over the world in the early phases of their careers and providing them with the best possible support for their career paths. We have defined four fields of action that provide us with a framework for running a modern university – **People, Education, Research and Outreach**. In addition, we take the four cross-sectional tasks of equality, internationalization, sustainability and digitalization into consideration in all FAU's fields of activity. We support our early career researchers in the four fields of action and the four cross-sectional tasks. This enables us to educate them to become responsible individuals in research, education, industry, politics and society. We promote early academic independence, equality in all areas and an appreciative and respectful culture of communication.

Our early career researchers are **doctoral candidates (R1, "first stage researchers"<sup>1</sup>)**, **post-docs (R2, "recognized researchers"<sup>1</sup>)** and researchers who are increasingly working independently, i.e. **heads of junior research groups, habilitation candidates, and W1 professors (R3, "established researchers"<sup>1</sup>)**. We would also like to explicitly include students who are already working in research and all early career researchers who do not fall into the above categories, but whose contribution is just as important for FAU's success.

All members of FAU commit to the following principles and also respect FAU's values of "**Innovation – Diversity – Passion**" when supporting early career researchers. While doing so, they always observe, teach and actively implement the standards of good research practice.

FAU is a platform for innovative thinkers in all phases of their careers, with the FAU Development Plan providing the strategic framework for future developments. The **people** field of action focuses on the institutionalization of reliable individual development paths, thus forming the guiding principle of academic career development at FAU.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the European Union's phase model.





## Our search... for the most talented minds

School outreach | International degree programs | International calls for applications | Welcome Service | Active recruiting | Religious and ideological diversity

We want to attract the most promising talents to FAU, no matter what stage of their career they are at. School pupils receive information early on about the degree programs on offer and the research we carry out at FAU. Our **international, high quality and research-based degree programs** and innovative teaching methods enable us to position FAU as the place to be for curious, open minded and ambitious people on the global education market. Innovation needs talent. We therefore actively seek talent all over the world and provide the best possible support before and during their time at FAU. Respectful cooperation that is free from discrimination is a matter of course and forms the basis for a diverse campus culture (please refer to the FAU **Code of conduct** for religious and ideological diversity for more information).

## We encourage and expect... academic independence

Mentors | Third-party funding | Publications | Authorship | Internal funding programs | Knowledge transfer

Our experienced researchers act as **supervisors** and **mentors** for fellow researchers in the early stages of their careers. As well as providing subject-related advice, they enable early career researchers to **progress step-by-step to academic independence** and **support** them at each stage of their career, **guided by trust** and a **sense of responsibility**. While doing so, they teach the fundamental principles of scientific practice, professional standards and how to work with research data.

**Independent publication** and the **successful acquisition of third-party funding** are indispensable pre-requisites for academic independence in the long term. Our early career researchers therefore take part in **national and international calls** for research funding as early as possible. We **support** them across the university and in the faculties with our **professional research support service** and provide **internal competitive programs** for research funding. Furthermore, our early career researchers are encouraged to **publish independently** and receive opportunities for **developing projects by themselves** and for **building up their research profiles**. Communicating the standards for respectful, transparent handling of their own preliminary work and that of others is an essential part of the support we provide.

We also give our early career researchers the opportunity to take on **responsibility as supervisors themselves**, depending on their own career stage. This enables them to develop their skills as university lecturers and make an important contribution to academic training at FAU.

Creative and independent early career researchers have a leading role to play in driving **innovation in research and teaching** and transferring this innovation to society. As one of the most innovative universities in Germany, we also support the **independence of our early career researchers** by **providing**



**advice** for protecting their intellectual property and for registering and using patents. If research leads to business start-ups, FAU offers a comprehensive **range of support and advice** from which the researchers can benefit. Our aim is to strengthen the perception, responsibility and impact of FAU internally and externally.



## Increased... visibility

Conferences | Awards | Publications | Science communication

We actively support our researchers in **developing their visibility** within the scientific community. Participation in **scientific conferences** as well as the **presentation** and **publication** of their own academic work is a matter of course for our early career researchers. They are encouraged to do so by their chairs, institutes, and departments, and may receive financial support if funding is available. We also encourage them to actively participate in **national** and **international competitions for awards** and support these efforts by providing **advisory services and opportunities for gaining additional qualifications and exchanging ideas**. The visibility and success of its early career researchers makes a significant contribution to FAU's reputation as a university.

It goes without saying at FAU that all researchers are named as authors in a publication according to the contribution they have made. This gives them the opportunity to appear independently in a position of responsibility in a publication as early on as possible.

Furthermore, FAU offers a range of structures and services that provide support to its early career researchers to enable their research results to reach a wider audience.

We give our researchers the freedom to get involved in informing the public about their research as part of their work. We provide information about **project-related funding of science communication** as well as about **internal** and **external qualification opportunities** and **support** for science communication and provide financial support where possible.

## We provide... individual support to our early career researchers

Culture of appreciation | Supervisors | Supervision agreements | Structured  
doctoral degree programs | Managers | Prevention of abuses of power | Mental  
and physical health

Respectful, fair and appreciative collaboration with all those working in research and other areas is fundamental to our FAU's progress.

In their roles as managers and mentors, our experienced researchers are role models and thus the driving force and mainstay for **empowering and developing our early career researchers**. They offer regular meetings for career development and open up perspectives for career paths at university and outside university. All early career researchers should have at least one, but ideally two people they can turn to for advice and support. The terms of this supervision are defined in supervision agreements. Our early career researchers contribute to productive collaboration through responsible behavior and open communication and implement these principles themselves as supervisors.

FAU takes a clear stance against abuses of power, has structures in place to prevent them from happening, and provides support and advice to those affected. In conflict situations, we offer a system of various points of contact, mediators and advisory services.

In addition to **individual doctoral degrees**, FAU also offers **structured doctoral degree programs** for supporting high potentials and for quality assurance purposes. Alongside **externally-financed and evaluated programs**, we offer

**internal graduate programs** that also meet high quality standards. This allows a large number of doctoral candidates to benefit from **interdisciplinary and inter-faculty programs** that expand their horizons for interdisciplinary, creative, and solution-oriented approaches.

As an employer, FAU and all its managerial staff take care of the **physical and mental wellbeing** of employees. Our early career researchers benefit from the services provided in this area, from general **health awareness at the workplace**, to realistic and appropriate work requirements, and varied **programs for promoting good health**.



## We offer...

### qualification on many levels

Collaborations | Career paths | Qualification programs | Coaching

To provide our best talents with the best opportunities for development and for gaining research experience beyond the scope of our university, FAU uses the strengths of our network with **partner universities, extramural research institutions, public and cultural institutions and partners in industry.**

We want to help our early career researchers to develop into responsible and strong leaders. Regardless of whether this is for research or not, the development of leadership skills is a decisive factor in the career progression of our top talents. FAU provides special support to its early career researchers in this area and offers an extremely wide range of training courses for interdisciplinary skills. We combine these courses into **innovative and highly effective qualification programs**, particularly in the post-doc phase. In this way, we help early career researchers to gain and develop a wide range of skills that qualify them for positions of responsibility in research and society.

We are also aware of the many career paths open to researchers, and provide **individual coaching and training for personal development** centrally and at the faculties.



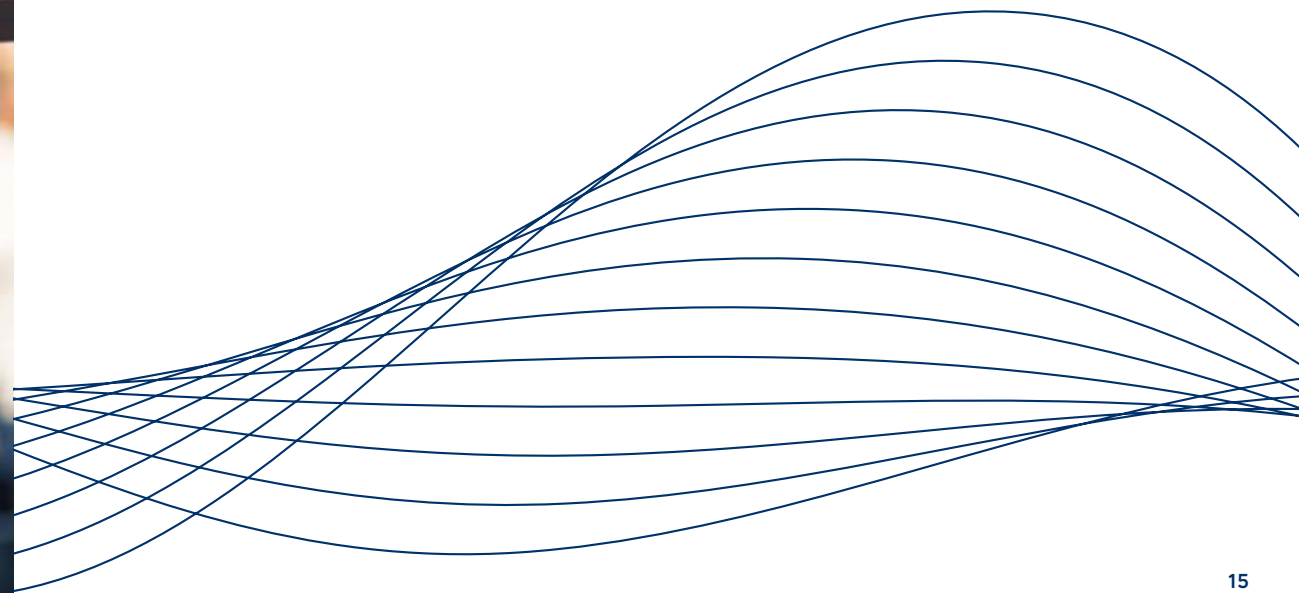


## We provide... opportunities to teach and to learn how to teach

Independent teaching | Teaching evaluation | Innovative teaching | Developing teaching skills

We provide early career researchers with the opportunity to gain experience in teaching independently without neglecting their research activities. Our early career researchers take on responsibility for their teaching, taking part in teaching **evaluations** supported by the institution, and also assume **(joint) responsibility for final theses**.

We motivate our early career researchers to actively get involved in **developing and establishing innovative teaching concepts** and we offer a varied range of **training courses and opportunities for coaching** aimed at improving **teaching skills**. Training and skills development courses held in English enable our international researchers without knowledge of German to actively participate in teaching on one hand, and improve their skills on the other.





## We open up... perspectives for careers in the field of research and beyond

Career advice | Careers outside university | Contracts | Transparency of requirements | Tenure Track, Change Track and Joint Track | Bilingualism

Planning one's **own individual career path**, whether it is in research, outside academia or **beyond institutional boundaries (FAU Joint Track)** is a continuous dynamic process that should be started as early as possible. We support our early career researchers with making these decisions both centrally and at the faculties **with advice, additional qualifications, career planning workshops or via the Career Service**, and inform them of the options available, thus creating an excellent start to any career path.

Academic careers face a conflict between flexibility and mobility on the one hand and planning certainty on the other. We are committed to providing contracts that match the qualification target of each candidate and allow our early career researchers enough space to grow academically. We offer **clearly set out contracts and clear communication paths** for all our researchers about possible career development at FAU.





## We facilitate...

networking beyond the boundaries of faculties and disciplines

Networking in the FAU family | Collaboration | Personal networks

Enabling researchers to **network** within the faculties and beyond the boundaries of faculties is a key task for our university. All areas within FAU actively practice and seek to improve **networking with cooperation partners and institutions on a regional, national and international level**. We enable our early-career researchers to set up and develop a **stable and far-reaching network of professional contacts**, but also emphasize the need for **networking and communication within the University**. We thus actively strengthen connections in research within and across disciplines and encourage our researchers to exchange ideas with each other.

Furthermore, we believe that **networking** does not only entail professional gain, but also social and personal benefits. FAU employees work together to create a pleasant and cooperative environment in which all employees have the opportunity to interact both inside and outside of work and breathe life into the FAU family.

## We get...

our early career researchers involved in managing academic affairs and create the structural framework required for successful funding applications.

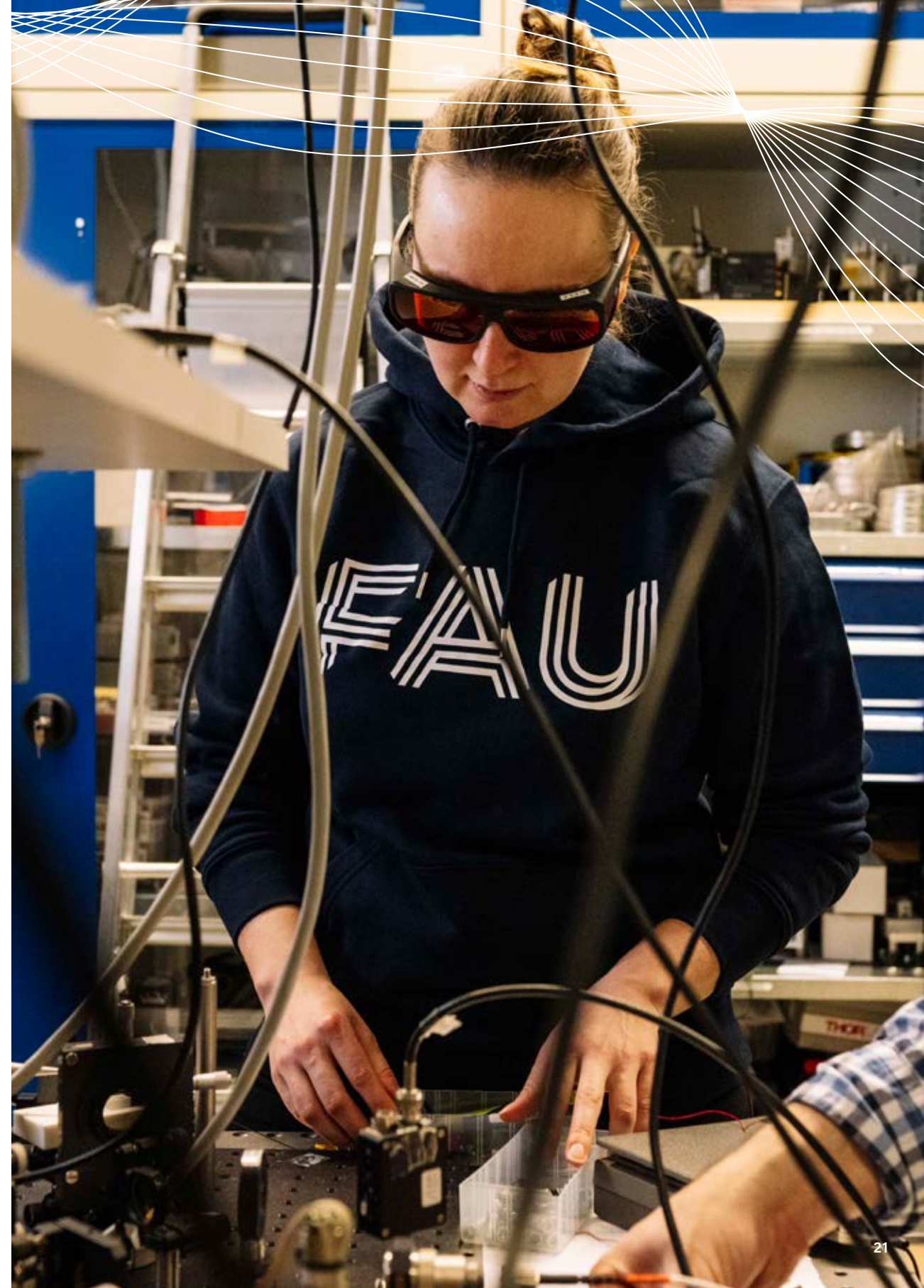
Council for Academic Staff, Doctoral candidates' representatives | General Doctoral Regulations | FAU-NGL | Tenure Track | DORA

Our researchers are invited to actively participate in the management of academic affairs in each of their qualification phases and to get involved in **working groups** and **committees** at FAU.

The **Council for Academic Staff** represents the interests of our researchers in **university committees**. Furthermore, doctoral candidates are **represented by elected representatives**. We thus involve all our researchers on an equal footing in our discussions and the decision-making processes relating to the management of academic affairs, taking their opinions and issues seriously.

FAU creates clear frameworks for predictable career paths and uses all the opportunities available for **developing the tenure track**. Excellent **heads of junior research groups** receive increased visibility and are integrated in a comparable way to **W1 professors**. Rules that apply across FAU for doctoral degrees and habilitations create logical standards for academic qualifications.

**Tenure track positions** are a firmly established academic career path at FAU and are an important component of a predictable academic career. We communicate the rules, requirements and quality and evaluation criteria of the stages of an academic career clearly and consistently in both German and English. FAU also follows the principles of the **San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment** ([sfdora.org/read](https://sf-dora.org/read)) when supporting early career researchers.





**We actively increase...**  
equal opportunities and offer a family-  
friendly environment

Gender mainstreaming | Diversity management | Consistent prevention of  
discrimination | Gender equality plan | Balancing work and family life

When supporting our researchers, we consistently pursue the goal of equal opportunities, for which FAU uses three interlinked strategies supported by various measures: **gender mainstreaming, diversity management** and striking a **balance between studying, working and having a family**. In early career phases in particular, the focus is on specific and needs-based support for female researchers, for example via mentoring programs and role models, in order to provide them with additional motivation to remain in research. FAU's measures and initiatives tailored to the faculties and the relevant target groups for increasing the proportion of women in research are regularly verified and tailored to meet requirements. The regularly negotiated internal target agreements are an important career and personnel development tool for supporting female early career researchers. FAU's Gender equality plan for academia and research forms the basis for integrating equality of opportunity into our institutional structures.

Other aspects of equality of opportunity at FAU cover the creation of a **learning, teaching and research environment that is free from discrimination; the inclusion of people with disabilities; equal opportunities in education; and the recognition of diversity in gender identities and sexual orientation**. Based on the FAU **Diversity concept** that defines diversity as a prime concern throughout FAU and that brings the four dimensions of diversity into focus, FAU promotes a culture based on treating others with respect, where each and every individual is valued.

FAU is committed to **protecting its members from discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment**, and has pledged to create an environment where individuals can study, work and carry out research without experiencing disadvantages or harassment for reasons of gender, race or ethnic origin, age, disability or chronic illness, sexual orientation, religion or belief. It actively strives to protect against and prevent discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment and raises awareness of the specific problems they pose in research.

In order to meet the requirements of **balancing family life with a career in research**, FAU provides a wide variety of support to early career researchers. In addition to a wide range of advisory services, this includes flexible working times and family-friendly meeting times, family workspaces at several locations, tailored and individual childcare and a large number of childcare spaces. By passing the "Code of conduct - family-friendly FAU" and by signing the charter "Familie in der Hochschule", FAU has pledged to value family responsibilities and enables its members to balance family life and a career in research.

## We ensure... quality through monitoring and evaluations

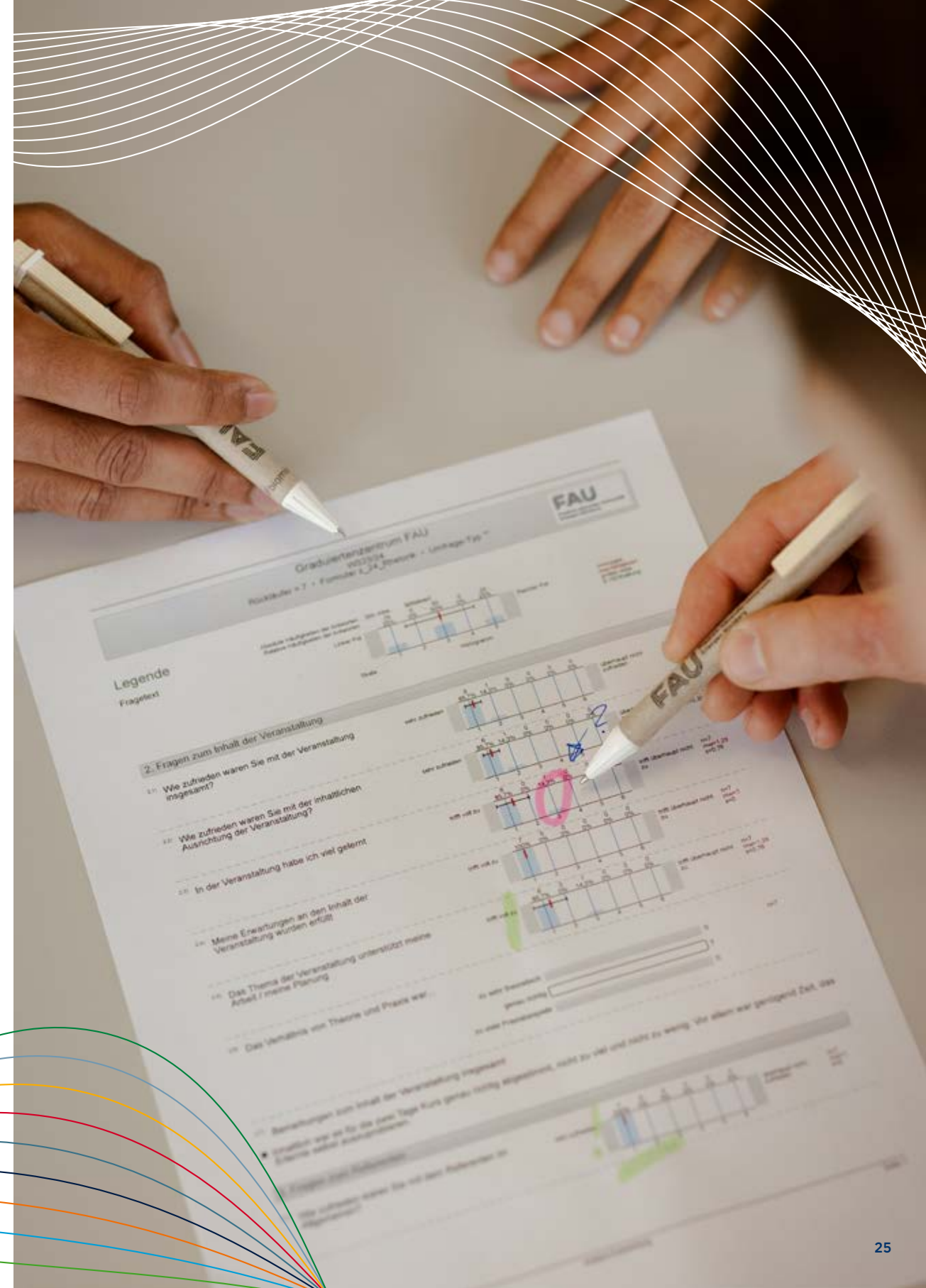
Evaluation of all services | Data collection | Central evaluation and provision of data

We continuously **evaluate** our services and develop them in **consultation with our researchers**. In addition, we use existing data to identify fields of action and to make improvements where necessary. To do so, all **information is collected centrally** and made available to all organizational units.

## We keep... in touch with our alumni

Outreach | FAU Community | Research and innovation ecosystem

The diversity of our disciplines reflects the diversity of the people that drive our University forward. Our commitment allows us to establish a **close relationship with our early career researchers**, who, as alumni, carry the values and goals of the FAU family out into the world. We keep **in touch with our alumni**, encourage them **to network with each other**, and offer various **networking events** that are **interdisciplinary** and cover a wide range of topics. We nurture **contacts to our partners in industry** and strengthen **networks** in our **research and innovation ecosystem**.



## We support you

A large number of points of contact and services are available to support you in all aspects of your work at our FAU. You will find a selection below:

**Welcome Center:** [www.fau.eu/research/welcome-centre](http://www.fau.eu/research/welcome-centre)

**FAU Early Career Support and Graduate Center:**  
[www.fau.eu/graduate-centre](http://www.fau.eu/graduate-centre)

**Doctoral Candidates' Council:** [www.blogs.fau.de/proko](http://www.blogs.fau.de/proko)

**Council for Academic Staff:** [www.kwm.fau.de](http://www.kwm.fau.de)

**FAU Service for Researchers:**  
[www.fau.eu/research/services-for-researchers](http://www.fau.eu/research/services-for-researchers)

**Office of Equality and Diversity:** [www.equality-and-diversity.fau.eu](http://www.equality-and-diversity.fau.eu)

**Family Service:** [www.familienservice.fau.eu](http://www.familienservice.fau.eu)

**Innovation in Learning Institute:** <https://www.ili.fau.de/en>

**Center for Continuing Education in University-Level Teaching:**  
[www.fbzhl.fau.de/en](http://www.fbzhl.fau.de/en)

**Career Service:**  
[www.fau.eu/education/advice-and-services/career-service](http://www.fau.eu/education/advice-and-services/career-service)

**Knowledge and Technology Transfer:**  
[www.intern.fau.de/outreach/kooperation-und-transfer](http://www.intern.fau.de/outreach/kooperation-und-transfer)

**Science communication:**  
[www.fau.eu/research/services-for-researchers/science-communication](http://www.fau.eu/research/services-for-researchers/science-communication)  
[www.wissenschaftskommunikation.de/kategorie/articles-in-english](http://www.wissenschaftskommunikation.de/kategorie/articles-in-english)

**Conflict advice:**  
[www.intern.fau.de/personal-und-arbeitsleben/personalentwicklung/konfliktberatung](http://www.intern.fau.de/personal-und-arbeitsleben/personalentwicklung/konfliktberatung)

### Offices for Research and Early Career Researchers at the Faculties:

[www.phil.fau.eu/research/early-career](http://www.phil.fau.eu/research/early-career)

[www.rw.fau.eu/research/graduate-school](http://www.rw.fau.eu/research/graduate-school)

[www.med.fau.eu/research/young-researchers](http://www.med.fau.eu/research/young-researchers)

[www.nat.fau.eu/research/young-researchers](http://www.nat.fau.eu/research/young-researchers)

[www.tf.fau.eu/research](http://www.tf.fau.eu/research)

## We keep you informed

Some helpful additional information:

**FAU's mission statement with the PERO fields of action:**  
[www.fau.eu/fau/welcome-to-fau/mission-fau](http://www.fau.eu/fau/welcome-to-fau/mission-fau)

**FAU Development Plan:**  
[www.fau.eu/fau/strategy-and-objectives](http://www.fau.eu/fau/strategy-and-objectives)

**FAU Regulations for safeguarding good scientific practice:**  
[www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#fehlverhalten](http://www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#fehlverhalten)

**Gender equality plan:**  
<https://www.equality-and-diversity.fau.eu/equal-opportunities/fau-equality-concept-2023-2027-for-academic-staff/>

**Diversity concept:**  
[www.gender-und-diversity.fau.de/das-diversitaetskonzept-der-fau](http://www.gender-und-diversity.fau.de/das-diversitaetskonzept-der-fau)

**Code of conduct for religious and ideological diversity:**  
[www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#code-of-conduct](http://www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#code-of-conduct)

**Guidelines on preventing and dealing with cases of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment:**  
[www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#antidiskriminierung](http://www.fau.de/fau/rechtsgrundlagen/sonstige-regelungen/#antidiskriminierung)

**Guidelines on innovative teaching:**  
[www.fau.eu/education/teaching-at-fau/guidelines-for-innovative-teaching](http://www.fau.eu/education/teaching-at-fau/guidelines-for-innovative-teaching)

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