Dear Colleagues,

You have in front of you the first edition of our newsletter, by means of which we would like to inform you regularly about upcoming activities of the Gutenberg Research College (GRC). As a relatively young institution, the GRC invites you to get into contact with our fellows and the members of the Executive Committee to experience firsthand the benefits offered by an interdisciplinary network that aims to promote communication within Johannes Gutenberg University.

The GRC, which was founded in 2007, pursues two main goals: first, the provision of advisory services to the university authorities regarding strategic research issues; and second, the funding of individual excellence by awarding GRC fellowships to external scholars as well as leading researchers at our university. These fellowships are awarded after a rigorous review process.

I invite you to learn more about the GRC and its work on the following pages. Should you have any further questions regarding our work, please do not hesitate to contact me and my colleagues on the Executive Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Matthias Neubert

Funding of Individual Excellence

By awarding fellowships (research professorships), the GRC is able to honor excellent individual researchers, relieve them of their teaching duties and administration for a period of up to five years, and thus provide them with more time for their own research. Since its foundation in 2007, approximately 25 fellows have benefited from support by the GRC. An interesting complement to the individual fellowships are the collective fellowships of the research units “Historical Cultural Sciences” (2009–2011) and “Media Convergence” (2010–2012). Here, six external fellows per research unit serve to support specific profile areas of JGU, pursue their own research projects in Mainz, and are involved in lecture series, conferences, and doctoral seminars.

Picture (photographer: Stefan F. Sämmer): (f.l.t.r.) Prof. Matthias Neubert, Prof. Peter O. Mülbert, Prof. Walter Bisang, Prof. Stuart Parkin, Prof. Claudia Eder, Prof. Detlef Schuppan, Prof. Ulrich Förstermann, Prof. Georg Krausch, Prof. em. Elmar Mittler.
New fellows

Professor Dr. Walter Bisang, Department of English and Linguistics, JGU
Walter Bisang has been professor of General and Comparative Linguistics at JGU since 1992 and is speaker of the Research and Cultural Studies in Mainz (SOCUM). Bisang’s major research interests focus on the comparison of different linguistic theories, grammaticalization, and language contact. He is engaged in the study of languages from all over the world, particularly from East and Southeast Asia, West Africa, and the Caucasus.

Professor Dr. Jürgen Gaul, Institute of Physical Chemistry, JGU
Jürgen Gaul is not only among the most renowned scientists at JGU but also regarded as one of the leading quantum chemists worldwide. In addition to numerous other distinctions, he was awarded the Leibniz Prize in 2005. His work combines methodical developments with their implementation in high-performance computer programs and relevant applications in chemistry.

Professor Dr. Peter O. Mülbert, Department of Law, JGU
Peter O. Mülbert is professor for civil law, commercial law, and banking law at JGU as well as director of the Center for German and International Law of Financial Services. He is also a member of the “Panel of Financial Services Experts” at the European Parliament, and is considered one of the most renowned specialists for German and international law.

Professor Dr. Dr. Detlef Schuppan, I. Department of Medicine, University Medical Center of JGU
Detlef Schuppan has been professor for molecular and translational medicine (fibrosis and coeliac research) at Mainz University Medical Center since December 2010. From 2004 to 2010, he was lecturer, professor, and senior physician for gastroenterology and hepatology at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at Harvard Medical School. Schuppan is an international expert in the fields of fibrosis and coeliac research.

Professor Dr. William J. Marciano, Brookhaven National Laboratory
William Marciano is a theoretical elementary particle physicist at Brookhaven National Laboratory and adjunct professor at Yale University. He is recipient of the Sakurai Prize (together with A. Sirlin), awarded by the American Physical Society for his groundbreaking work on the calculation of electroweak radiative corrections. Marciano is also winner of the Humboldt Research Prize and fellow of the American Physical Society.

Professor Dr. Nikolaus Wegmann, Princeton University
Nikolaus Wegmann has been professor at the Department of German at Princeton University since 2006. His work is characterized by an innovative conjunction between literary and media studies and the history of knowledge and science. He enjoys an excellent reputation reaching far beyond the field of German Studies, and he is regarded as one of the most distinguished international literary scholars of his generation.
Its advisory services to the university management have turned out to be one of the GRC’s most valuable functions. In cases regarding important strategic issues related to the research profile of JGU, the authorities consult the GRC Executive Committee to profit from the diversity of its academic expertise transcending particular interests.

Strategic Processes Supported by the GRC: the Case of Bioinformatics

Important strategic processes require a broad incorporation of all areas involved. Thus, the GRC initiated discussions on the establishment of a center for bioinformatics at JGU, bringing together external experts and interested parties from the university. The first stage of this process involved the organization of a workshop to gather and present the different requirements and various conceivable models for a center for bioinformatics. Based on the outcome of the workshop, a concept for such a center is currently being developed further by a working group within the GRC in cooperation with researchers from the participating disciplines. In the end, this endeavor could result in a recommendation to the university leadership for the establishment of such a center.

Excellence Initiative, Second Phase

During the preliminary stage of the current second phase of the federal Excellence Initiative, the GRC assisted the university leadership in the selection process of groups who were asked to file preliminary proposals. The drafts underwent an external pre-assessment organized by the GRC, which also supported the various groups preparing proposals in a variety of different ways. Of the seven draft proposals from Mainz, three were successful – the Graduate School MAINZ, which is already receiving funding, is automatically permitted to submit a follow-up proposal. JGU’s draft proposal outlining the concept of the university’s future institutional strategy and research orientation was successful as well – here the GRC is also involved in the planning process for the submission of the full proposal.

A Summary of the Excellence Initiative

By means of the Excellence Initiative, the federal and state governments intend to strengthen Germany’s long-term position as a location for scholarship, technology, and science, improve its competitiveness on the international stage, and draw more attention to top-level research in all academic fields. The competition comprises three lines of funding:

1. Graduate schools for the promotion of young academics
2. Clusters of excellence to promote top-level research
3. Institutional strategies for the project-related development of top-level university research

### Submitted proposals:

- Cluster of Excellence Earth and the Anthropocene (ERA)
- Cluster of Excellence Precision Physics, Fundamental Interactions, and Structure of Matter (PRISMA)
- Cluster of Excellence Molecularly Controlled Non-Equilibrium (MCNE)

In cooperation with TU Kaiserslautern:
- Cluster of Excellence Kaiserslautern Center for Advanced Spin Engineering (CASE)

Follow-up application:
- Graduate School Materials Science in Mainz (MAINZ)

Institutional Strategy: Moving Minds – Crossing Boundaries

### Phase 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Funding (€)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007-2012</td>
<td>1.9 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-2017</td>
<td>2.7 billion</td>
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