

HUMBOLDT KOLLEG

"Humboldtians and scientific progress in the Central and East European countries"

Sofia, BULGARIA, November 16-18, 2017

The Humboldt Union in Bulgaria is planning a Humboldt Kolleg with a title "Humboldtians and scientific progress in the Central and East European countries". The main idea of the Kolleg is to show the key contributions of Humboldtians from the Central and East Europe to the scientific progress in their countries over the past 25 years.

The Kolleg is organized by the Board of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria and will take place in Sofia, Bulgaria on 16th -18th November 2017. Following the positive example from the Humboldt Kolleg in 2015 the program of this Kolleg is prepared in cooperation with Department "Science" (<http://www.sofia.diplo.de/Vertretung/sofia/de/02/Referate/Wissenschaft.html>) in the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Sofia.

The past 25 years were very important for the former socialistic countries. During the period these countries underwent significant changes that reflected on all aspects of their societies, including science. Under the new conditions a large number of researchers in these countries "opened" to the international science. A significant role in this process was taken over by scientists who became Humboldtians. Many of them return back to their countries, where they give their contributions to the scientific progress in their societies. Simultaneously, in the recent years some of these countries experience difficulties in setting a sustainable scientific policy and keeping their best scientists and young researchers home.

Sharing experience and exchanging ideas between Humboldtians of these countries and researchers from Germany related to these problems will be one of the main accents of the Kolleg. Another important aspect will be involvement of as much as possible young researchers in the Kolleg by showing them examples of successful scientific carriers and giving possibilities to present their own scientific results at a representative scientific forum. The Kolleg will be a forum for exchanging scientific results and building a network between the researchers from Bulgaria, Germany and other participating countries.

In 2017 our Humboldt Union in Bulgaria celebrates its 25 anniversary. We would like to combine our anniversary celebration with the Humboldt Kolleg and to take the opportunity to outline the contribution of the Humboldtians to the development and scientific progress in Bulgaria.

The main goals of the Kolleg will be:

1. To strengthen the cooperation between the countries from the Central and East European countries and Germany. This goal is in line with the programs of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation "Go East" and "New Lands".
2. To strengthen the participation of young scientists by showing them positive examples of successful scientific career. We would like to stress especially on this due to the problems with young researchers not only in our, but also in other CEE countries.
3. To mark the 25th anniversary of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria.

These goals can be achieved by involving as lecturers prominent scientists from Germany and CEE countries who have won prestigious scientific awards, including also those given by the Humboldt Foundation. In particular, we plan to have as a lecturer a young researcher who won the Sofia Kovalevskaja Award (a contributor could be Prof. Dr. Mirka Uhlirova, University of Cologne, Germany) as well as a lecturer from Germany (a contributor to this topic could be Irene Friesenhahn, Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, Berlin, with the support of the German Embassy in Sofia) to address important for the experienced and young people questions, e.g., how to identify the best scientists, how to keep them in their countries etc. The Kolleg will be also a podium for the young scientists by giving them possibilities for oral presentations organized in parallel thematically oriented scientific sessions. We are expecting to have about 50 young participants, postdocs and PhD students, what is a respective number for the Kollegs organized so far in Bulgaria. The anniversary of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria will be featured by a series of thematic lectures summarizing the most significant achievements of the Bulgarian Humboldtians in the last 25 years.

As in the other Humboldt Kollegs, an integral part of the event will be the presentation of the programs of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, for which we invited Prof. Dr. Lora Taseva - Ambassador-scientist of the Foundation for Bulgaria. This presentation will be open not only for the participants in the Kolleg but also for all interested colleagues.

The preliminary program of the Humboldt Kolleg will include the following:

- (i) A session on the Humboldtians and scientific progress in the CEE countries including lectures from invited German scientists and presidents/ representatives of the Humboldt clubs from CEE countries.
- (ii) A session with a special focus on junior scientist in two parts: Part 1, including lectures of prominent young scientists from Germany; Part 2: including a lecture on the problems of young scientists and a presentation of the programs of the Foundation with questions and answers.
- (iii) Three thematic scientific sessions for junior scientists including oral presentations of young researchers. Due to the large number of young participants, parallel sessions will be organized.
- (iv) Session devoted to the 25th anniversary of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria including lectures on the history of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria and contributions of Humboldtians to the scientific progress in our country.

As participants from Bulgaria in the Kolleg we will invite Humboldtians from all fields of science, young researchers, representatives of the Bulgarian authorities as well as the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Rectors of the leading Bulgarian universities.

The Organizing Committee of the Humboldt Kolleg will be the Board of the Humboldt Union in Bulgaria. The Kolleg will take place in the main buildings of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and St. Kliment Ohridsky University of Sofia (both located in the city center).