

Former East German University Reaches Out to the World

By CHRISTOPHER F. SCHUETZE
Published: January 13, 2013

DRESDEN, GERMANY — Dresden bears the scars of modern history. Almost destroyed by bombs during [World War II](#), it was initially rebuilt in the distinctive style of the Socialist state in what was then the German Democratic Republic. After the reunification of the country in 1990, much money was spent to make its downtown modern and consumer-friendly.

[Enlarge This Image](#)



CRTD

A lab at the Center for Regenerative Therapies Dresden in Germany.

Connect With Us on Twitter
Follow

@nytimesworld for international breaking news and headlines.

[Twitter List: Reporters and Editors](#)



On a hill overlooking the city, the [Technical University of Dresden](#) has gone through a similar evolution. Founded in 1828, it was one of the leading technical institutions in the region until the end of World War II. After the war, under the new East German Socialist state, it became a leading institution for technical training, especially renowned for its engineering prowess. The reunification of Germany brought the university a major restructuring period in which many staff and faculty members lost their posts. Starting in the early 1990s, the school focused on becoming competitive in the reunited Germany and beyond.

Last June, TU of Dresden, as it is known, reached its goal when it was crowned one of Germany's new elite universities. Along with bragging rights, the title comes with extensive federal funding. The admission into the small club of elite universities is a first for a former East German university outside of Berlin.

"Of course the recognition is important," said Hans Müller-Steinhagen, the rector of the university, "but it's merely the official acknowledgment of our outstanding development."

Over the next five years, the university, two of its research clusters and a graduate school will receive €171.9 million, or about \$229 million, directly from the national government.

"The recognition is more important than the money," said Dr. Müller-Steinhagen. It puts the university in a league with heavyweights like the University of Heidelberg and Humboldt University in Berlin.

Preparing applications for the funding took several years. Research clusters studying regenerative therapy and advanced electronics, as well as a graduate school, applied for separate funds. Dr. Müller-Steinhagen describes the application process as an intense labor of institutional inventorying and organization.

"In Dresden, the spirit of collaboration reigns," he said.

World-class research in Dresden has great implications in a region of Germany that was once overlooked by high-technology businesses. The work of the university and federally funded research centers has bolstered commercial research hubs in the area. In what is marketed as the Dresden Concept, government money that goes to the university

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

SAVE

EMAIL

SHARE

PRINT

SINGLE PAGE

REPRINTS



MOST EMAILED

MOST VIEWED



1. WELL
[Ask Well: Plantar Fasciitis Relief](#)



2. [Take a Deep Breath](#)



3. WELL
[Sit Less, Live Longer?](#)



4. WELL
[Artificial Sweeteners May Disrupt Body's Blood Sugar Controls](#)



5. [Panel Urges Overhauling Health Care at End of Life](#)



6. IT'S THE ECONOMY
[Will Portland Always Be a Retirement Community for the Young?](#)



7. OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR
[Israel's N.S.A. Scandal](#)



8. MACHINE LEARNING
[Review and Video: With Big New iPhones, the iOS 8 Software Inside Shines](#)



9. [At Buckingham Palace, a Dancing Guard Throws Decorum to the Wind](#)



10. OP-ED | MARK BITTMAN
[Let's Reject the 'Inevitable'](#)

[Go to Complete List »](#)

[Show My Recommendations](#)

ultimately enriches the regional economy.

The new Center for Advanced Electronics, based on the TU of Dresden campus, closely collaborates with communications and electronic companies, creating a hub where publicly funded research can quickly be adapted for market use, explained Uta Schneider, the program manager for the center. The regional research hub officially carries the name Silicon Saxony, after the German free state of Saxony, of which Dresden is the capital.

While many graduate students at the International Graduate School for Biomedicine and Bioengineering carry out research with faculty or postdoctoral researchers at the university or its associated hospital and institutes, they also have the option of working at independent research organizations like the Max Planck institutes.

Typical of the Dresden Concept is the Center for Regenerative Therapies, which previously had been awarded federal funding. The main part of its modern building — just across the street from the university hospital — is given to research laboratories, offices and conference rooms. The basement is reserved for shared equipment and space, like expensive specialized microscopes. The side wing is reserved for biotechnology startups, which benefit from the proximity to pure research. In the foyer, researchers hold a yearly retina information day, where they share insights gleaned from both their research and their work with patients suffering from vision problems.

1 | 2 | [NEXT PAGE »](#)

A version of this article appeared in print on January 14, 2013, in The International Herald Tribune.

[SAVE](#) [EMAIL](#) [SHARE](#)

[Subscribe to the International New York Times newspaper and save up to 65%](#)

Get Free E-mail Alerts on These Topics

[Bilingual Education](#)

[Education](#)

[Dresden \(Germany\)](#)

[East Germany](#)



The New York Times **NOVEMBER 11-12, 2014**
FOOD FOR TOMORROW STONE BARNES CENTER FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE
[REQUEST AN INVITATION >](#)

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

[University europe](#)

UT - eine der besten Universitäten

in Europa! Komm zum Infotag.

www.utwente.nl/Tag-der-offenen-Tuer

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

[MBA without Bachelor](#)

British Online MBA for Managers

Upgrade your career today !

www.college.ch

Former East German University Reaches Out to the World

Published: January 13, 2013

(Page 2 of 2)

Bearing the title of elite university is serious and lucrative business in Germany. The government funding is administered by the German Research Foundation, or D.F.G., which held its second Excellence Initiative competition last year; the first round covered funding from 2007 to 2012. The initiative is an attempt by the German federal government to send research and teaching funds directly to universities, which are traditionally funded by individual states.

Connect With Us on Twitter

Follow @nytimesworld for international breaking news and headlines.

[Twitter List: Reporters and Editors](#)



During this round of funding, which covers research and institutions until 2017, the D.F.G. is contributing €2.4 billion to higher education and research, an especially hefty sum, given [Europe's fiscal troubles](#).

This year, 11 universities were funded on the institutional level, compared with 9 during the last round.

Another 45 graduate schools and 43 clusters of excellence were also funded, not all at so-called elite universities. In a major upset, the University of Göttingen, which long thought itself — officially or not — as the elite German university, failed to be awarded a renewal of institutional excellence funding last year.

The federal funding is guaranteed for five years, so the institution must take care to invest some of the money long-term. For administrators who seek to cement the TU of Dresden's ascendancy as an international research destination, this means attracting senior researchers and top students and building infrastructure.

One part of the transformation of the TU of Dresden from regional power to national superstar is the internationalization of the university. Currently, 10.8 percent of its approximately 35,000 students are foreigners, though 14 percent of those who started last year came from abroad.

There are now 11 master programs offered in English. In the halls and the laboratory of the Center for Regenerative Therapies, where about 40 percent of the collaborators come from about 35 different countries, accented English is heard more often than German.

Ezio Bonifacio, a professor, researches regenerative therapies for diabetes. He arrived in Dresden in 2007 from Italy, where he was a director for the San Raffaele Institute. "One gets the impression that this is an international campus," he said.

Dr. Bonifacio, who has also worked in London and in Australia, said that top-level research done in Dresden competed on an international playing field.

About 60 percent of those studying in the International Graduate School for Biomedicine and Bioengineering are foreigners. And although students are encouraged to learn German, some obtain their degrees — either the German Doctorate or Ph.D.s — in Dresden without picking up the language, said Gerhard Rödel, head of the graduate school and vice rector of science.

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

SAVE

EMAIL

SHARE

PRINT

SINGLE PAGE

REPRINTS



MOST EMAILED

MOST VIEWED



1. WELL
[Ask Well: Plantar Fasciitis Relief](#)



2. [Take a Deep Breath](#)



3. WELL
[Sit Less, Live Longer?](#)



4. WELL
[Artificial Sweeteners May Disrupt Body's Blood Sugar Controls](#)



5. [Panel Urges Overhauling Health Care at End of Life](#)



6. IT'S THE ECONOMY
[Will Portland Always Be a Retirement Community for the Young?](#)



7. OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR
[Israel's N.S.A. Scandal](#)



8. MACHINE LEARNING
[Review and Video: With Big New iPhones, the iOS 8 Software Inside Shines](#)



9. [At Buckingham Palace, a Dancing Guard Throws Decorum to the Wind](#)



10. OP-ED | MARK BITTMAN
[Let's Reject the 'Inevitable'](#)

[Go to Complete List »](#)

[Show My Recommendations](#)

The university has set up a Welcome Center to help foreign students, academics and scientists with the German language and bureaucracy. Bilingual staff members help with matters like finding a place to live, registering with the city and finding kindergartens for their children. Starting in May, the center will move to the city center to work more closely with the city services.

[« PREVIOUS PAGE](#) 1 | 2

A version of this article appeared in print on January 14, 2013, in The International Herald Tribune.

SAVE EMAIL SHARE

Subscribe to the International New York Times newspaper and save up to 65%

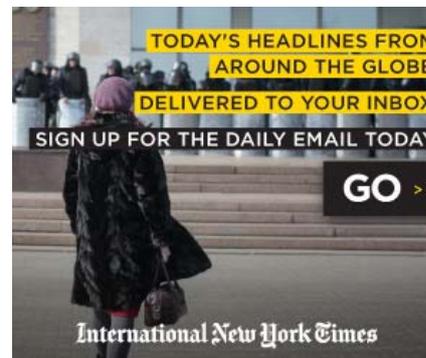
Get Free E-mail Alerts on These Topics

[Bilingual Education](#)

[Education](#)

[Dresden \(Germany\)](#)

[East Germany](#)



Ads by Google

what's this?

University europe

Eine neue Kultur kennenlernen? Gute

Uni? Komm am 19.11. zur UT!

www.utwente.nl/Tag-der-offenen-Tuer

Ads by Google

what's this?

Bachelor per Fernstudium

Bachelor-Fernstudium: BWL/Logistik/

Wirtschaftsrecht & -psychologie!

www.euro-fh.de/bachelor