Local Excellence, European Impact

French and German Regional Universities Driving Research, Innovation and Economic Development

Program
October 9, 2026

Embassy of France in Germany,
Pariser Platz 5, 10117 Berlin

11:00–12:00	**Arrival & Light Lunch** Registration and Networking
12:00–12:30	**Opening Session – Welcome** **Welcome by H.E. François Delattre** (Ambassador of the French Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany) **Welcome by German representative MinR'in Dr. Rahel Stefanie Stegemann** (Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space) **Opening by moderator Prof. Dr. Eva Martha Eckkrammer** (President, Trier University (UA11+))
12:30–14:30	**Impulse Talks** **Keynote Speech** Regional excellence across borders: Impact, Challenges and best practices **Prof. Oliver Günther, Ph.D.** (President, University of Potsdam & UA11+ chairman) **Panel Discussion** – Franco-German academic cooperation, European University Alliances – Strategic importance of regional universities in research, innovation and excellence – Advancing political and economic cooperation – Emerging challenges (competition for talent, geopolitics, research funding) **Germany: Prof. Dr. Peter Gust** (Prorector Third Mission and International Affairs, University of Wuppertal, Germany) **France: Prof. Dr. Ernesto Exposito** (Vice-President for International Relations, University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour)
14:30-15:00	Coffee Break

15:00-16:30	**Deep Dive Discussions – all in row plenary session** **01 University Cooperation: Research and Innovation Partnerships** – Joint research funding opportunities / Joint degree and mobility programs – EU funding frameworks: Horizon Europe **France: Prof. Dr. Sebastien Le Picard** (Vice-President for European and international strategy, University of Rennes) **Germany: Prof. Dr. Dominik Brodowski** (Vice-President for Internationalization and European Relations, Saarland University)
	02 Sustaining Excellence: Cross Border Cooperation – Development of territorial connections – Implementation of the EGTC status (e.g. Eucor – Le campus européen at the University of Strasbourg) **France: Dr. Pascale Erhart** (Deputy Vice-President for Multilingualism, University of Strasbourg) **Germany: Dr. Britta van Kempen** (Vice-President for Educational and European Affairs, University of Potsdam)
	03 Public-Private Partnerships: Universities and European Sovereignty – Governance – Knowledge transfer, innovation, impact **France: Prof. Dr. Frédéric Fotiadu** (Director, INSA Lyon) **Germany: Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ulrich Rückert** (Vice-Rector for digitization and data infrastructure, Bielefeld University, CoR Lab, Research Institute)
16:30-17:00	Coffee Break
17:00-17:30	**Deep Dive Discussions continued** **04 Democratic Resilience: The role of the University in the public eye** – Data and research security, combating misinformation – Preventing brain drain, ensuring equitable access to higher education **France: Prof. Dr. Ernesto Exposito** (Vice-President for International Relations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) **Germany: Prof. Dr. Evelyn Korn (**Vice-President, Marburg University)
17:30-18:30	**Closing Remarks** Focus: Outlook and Opportunities of Franco-German academic cooperation **France: Prof. Dr. Michael Toplis** (President, University of Toulouse) **Germany: Prof. Dr. Eva-Martha Eckkrammer** (President, Trier University & UA11+)
18:30	**Reception & Networking**