



Press Release

The University of Tübingen's 550th anniversary: Celebrations begin at start of winter semester

A range of events invite the public to join in under the motto "the value of knowledge" - The Science and Innovation Days festival goes on tour through the region, taking discussion of research beyond the University

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The University of Tübingen is kicking off its 550th year at the start of the winter semester. The motto is the value of knowledge, and until the end of 2027 the University is offering an extensive program aimed at bringing research and University history to life for a wide audience. Free events on campus and throughout the town will provide insights into one of Germany's oldest universities. The anniversary website, www.ut550.de, provides current information on the entire jubilee year program, which looks at the University's highlights and lowlights over its long history.

"The University's 550th anniversary gives us and the public a special opportunity to look back on a long history of academic findings and, at the same time, to reflect on their significance for the present and the future. Under the guiding principle of "the value of knowledge," our anniversary events invite you to get to know the University in all its many facets and to experience how the search for knowledge connects people, opens up new horizons, and contributes to the common good. Our University is built on this principle, which will continue to guide us in the future," says University President Professor Dr. Karla Pollmann.

A rich program of events has something for everyone

The anniversary celebrations begin at the ceremonial opening of the winter semester, along with the Dies Universitatis on October 14 and the official welcome to new students on October 15. The Science & Innovation Days, Tübingen's major research fair for everyone, will follow on November 6 and 7, featuring more than 30 events at twelve locations across town, including a math magic show, a family day at Hohentübingen Castle, a Student Science Slam, and a variety of workshops and discussions. The full Science & Innovation Days program is available at www.si-days.com. The research fair will go on tour through the summer of 2027

to ten municipalities across the state of Baden-Württemberg and may be viewed via digital channels too. On July 3, 2027, the main jubilee celebration will take place, featuring numerous events and a grand ceremony at the Collegiate Church, the site where the University was founded.

In addition to these big events, many other program highlights offer the opportunity to get to know the University and its seven faculties from new perspectives. Visitors may tour laboratories and research facilities at the faculties and institutes, explore historical collections, gain insights into current academic work, and in some cases even participate in experiments. Exhibitions, guided tours, and online services showcase parts of the University not usually accessible. All events are open to all and free of charge.

A fresh focus on overlooked figures and themes

There will be a special focus on people and issues which have taken a back seat in University history to date. One of them is Countess Mechthild of the Palatinate, a key patron at the University's founding. A new musical theater project will shed light on the first woman to study in Tübingen, Maria von Linden; the piece will premiere in July 2027. A documentary film produced for the anniversary traces the University's development from its founding to the present day by looking at particular biographies and events.

Several projects will have an impact beyond the anniversary year. For example, the University of Tübingen Museum's app will be expanded to include online tours of Tübingen. A book project aimed at the general public, titled "550 Jahre Tübingen. Zwischen Existenz- und Exzellenzfragen," traces developments at the University of Tübingen from its founding in 1477 to the present day. And about 40 of the 300 works in the Professors' Gallery will be restored and presented afresh in an exhibition at the castle. These historical images will be juxtaposed with contemporary photographs of University members, highlighting the diversity of today's University.

The University of Tübingen was founded in 1477 by Count Eberhard the Bearded, supported by his mother Mechthild. Tübingen is the third-oldest university in the state of Baden-Württemberg after Heidelberg (1386) and Freiburg (1457). Today, some 30,000 people study in more than 200 study programs at the University's seven faculties. Tübingen has been one of Germany's official Universities of Excellence since 2012; and following the recent evaluation, will continue to be for at least seven more years from 2027. As of the start of this year, the University is home to a total of six clusters of excellence - consortia of outstanding academics working jointly in a defined field of research. An institution of research and teaching, an employer, and provider of a wide cultural spectrum of services for the public, the University is an important part of the social fabric of Tübingen and the whole region.

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Jahre seit 1477

UNIVERSITÄT TÜBINGEN

We have devised a logo to celebrate the University's 550th birthday.

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