



Press Release

## **Leisure in Cultural Change and Alternative Sensor Systems**

### German Research Foundation Approves Two Further Collaborative Research Centers at the University of Freiburg

The German Research Foundation (DFG) has given its approval for the establishment of two new Collaborative Research Centers (SFB) at the University of Freiburg on 1 January 2013. The SFB “Leisure. Concepts, Spaces, Figures” will receive just under 5.6 million euros in funding. The SFB/Transregio “Planar Optronic Systems,” which will be distributed among several locations, will receive a total of 9.8 million euros. The DFG announced the decision today in Bonn. The two centers will receive funding until 31 December 2016.

Two other SFB’s, “Heroes, Heroizations, Heroisms” and “Medical Epigenetics – From Basic Mechanisms to Clinical Applications,” were already established at the University of Freiburg on 1 July 2012. “It is a great accomplishment for our university to secure funding for four new Collaborative Research Centers in a year,” says Rector Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**. “The fact that two of these SFB’s are based in the humanities demonstrates – alongside the success of our natural science–engineering clusters in the Excellence Initiative – how strong our research is across the entire spectrum of the disciplines.”

The SFB “Leisure. Concepts, Spaces, Figures” will study the cultural histories of leisure, leading directly to research on the present in projects in philosophy, sociology, psychology, and ethnology. “We want to find out what the different conceptions of leisure say about the cultures and societies in which they are prevalent,” says the German studies scholar Prof. Dr. **Burkhard Hasebrink**, director of the SFB. Leisure is characterized above all

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by the absence of obligations and constraints: It has neither sense nor purpose and is free of all logic of exploitation – thus providing free space for creativity. The goal of the SFB is to open up such free societal spaces with the university as a point of departure, and thus to contribute offensively to shaping the manifold changes taking place today in the global knowledge society. The participating disciplines include German studies, Slavic studies, English studies, Romance studies, classical philology, philosophy, theology, art history, psychosomatic medicine, sociology, and ethnology, as well as the Computing Center and the University Library.

The goal of the SFB/Transregio “Planar Optronic Systems” is to develop innovative optical sensors that can be pressed into thin, flexible polymer films. Large-scale networks of such sensors could be used to measure pressure, temperature, or chemical and biological substances. Areas of application include medicine, astronautics, and building technology, to name just a few. The universities of Hanover and Freiburg will be in charge of coordinating the center, which will also include the universities Braunschweig and Clausthal as associated members. Prof. Dr. **Hans Zappe**, head of the Laboratory for Micro-Optics at the Department of Microsystems Engineering of the University of Freiburg, will serve as co-director of the SFB. Five laboratories of the Department of Microsystems Engineering are contributing to the project.

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The University of Freiburg achieves top positions in all university rankings. Its research, teaching, and continuing education have received prestigious awards in nationwide competitions. Over 22,000 students from 100 nations are enrolled in 186 degree programs. Around 5,000 teachers and administrative employees put in their effort every day – and experience that family friendliness, equal opportunity, and environmental protection are more than just empty phrases here.