

Berliner Akademie für weiterbildende Studien e.V.

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Contribution to the international conference on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the UTA of the University of Wrocław

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Berlin will provide a considerable contribution on the topic of the science conference, being in the luxurious position of having 4 universities. They have offered own education activities for years, and started joint efforts recently. (e.g. philosophy in Berlin – one university calendar for all).

The universities are:

- The Humboldt-University, more than 300 years old,
- The Technical University, a little younger,
- The Freie (free) University,
- The University of Arts, the youngest one,

And then there is the BERLINER AKADEMIE for further studies, an overall institution, which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year.

The BERLINER AKADEMIE organises -by turns at one of the universities –introduction courses for people of middle and older age twice a year – in april and october. About 400 citizens of Berlin and Brandenburg attend these events. On these courses representatives of the universities present their programmes for the target group. The programmes contain the examination of scientific topics and problems. This opens a challenging possibility to create a meaningful and satisfactory new period of life. The mandate for further education of the Higher Education Law in Berlin contains this component.

It is important to know, that interested people go to the BERLINER AKADEMIE for advice and that guest students attend the regular courses and can assemble their own studyprogram.

The participants get the opportunity to gain knowledge in many branches of university research and teaching, and there will also be an exchange between generations, equally important these days. The programmes of the universities differ from each other, but they do have one thing in common: their courses are a place of encounter between young and old.

Some examples of the programs of the centres of further education for the special target group at these universities are:

The „Freie“ University has offered a guest student card program for this special target group for five years already and will develop it further. It contains selected university lectures, studies for further education and exclusive offers for guest students. And there are extra offers of the cultural partners of the university, such as the museums, the foundation of Prussian palaces and gardens, some theatres and concert halls in Berlin.

In 1985 the project „Berlin model-education for activities after professional life“ was founded at the Technical University. Older citizens get a training for volunteer work in the fields of „environment“, „food and health“ and „community and communication“. One year later the pilot project „contact-and information centre for environmental questions“ started. Its aim is to open the Technical University to active social movements and start projects together. Both models are still very much in demand.

The program of the Humboldt-University is published by the department for profession and science. It contains activities for guest students of nearly all faculties but also overviews of lecture series and courses containing different subjects, the general studies (Studium generale).

There is no limit to age or professional status for guest students, and no A-levels are asked for. The lecturer of the chosen course however has to grant permission to participate.

The Charité, the world-famous medical centre in Berlin, offers something special, the SENIORENUNIVERSITÄT (university for seniors). Since 1991 it has worked together with the BERLINER AKADEMIE and is supported by „pro seniores“, the association for the promotion of the Seniorenuniversität Berlin. The study year goes from september till May. They had more than 1000 registrations this year. Subjects were „medicine through the ages“, „technology serving mankind“ and „news from science“. The courses are free of charge.

The University of Arts offers free concerts by music classes, exhibitions of work from graduates in architecture, painting etc. Every 3 months a new program is published.

Additionally to all these programs, the BERLINER AKADEMIE organizes a Summer University each year in co-operation with one of the universities. This BERLINER SOMMER-UNI lasts for 9 days and welcomes about 500 participants from all over Germany and abroad.

The last few years the universities of Berlin have opened up more and more to all citizens in Berlin and its hinterland. In this way they meet the former mentioned mandate of further education. The offers are diversified and contain mostly:

- Scientifically sound analysis of actual problems
- Scientific research results, published intelligible to all
- Dialogues, discussions and talks about science, society and technology
- Results of teaching music, performing arts and design.

I hope, I could give you a look into the work of the universities and the academy of Berlin of further education. They form a considerable component of further education for older people in Europe.