

## Position of the TUM Graduate Council

### Academic Career Paths at TUM

The current employment situation of many non-professorial teaching and research staff at the Technical University of Munich (TUM) highlights the need for significant structural reform. As the representative body of doctoral candidates at TUM, the Graduate Council is particularly interested in the development of viable career paths for the next generation of mid-level academic staff. The positions articulated below consider fully the planned reforms for the advancement of mid-level academic staff encompassed in the latest Excellence Strategy.

### Challenges of the Status Quo

From the perspective of the TUM Graduate Council, non-professorial teaching and research staff currently face the following challenges:

1. The lack of long-term prospects in academia other than a professorial trajectory prevents many promising academics from pursuing a university career.
2. Temporary employment contracts lead to insufficient or non-existent knowledge transfer between mid-level academic staff.
3. Many non-professorial research and teaching staff members spend a large percentage of their working time on tasks,
  - a. unrelated to their actual research,
  - b. for which they have no training,
  - c. or which require a level of expertise that can only be acquired through many years of experience (e.g. technical support, finance, fundraising, etc.).
4. Fixed-term contracts and the resulting lack of job security make it extremely difficult to reconcile familial and other obligations.
5. The few permanent posts that exist are often allocated directly to a Chair. This can lead to complications when academic staff are entrusted with areas of responsibility for which they are neither motivated nor qualified, e.g. due to a change in the orientation of the Chair.

### Main Objectives

Introducing structural changes at TUM would not only increase the university's attractiveness for highly qualified junior scientists but enhance its competitiveness on an international level through greater efficiency in research. In particular, we regard the following developments in the mid-level academic structure as desirable:

1. Greater continuity and job security, as well as the improved planability of mid-level academic careers
2. Clear definition of areas of responsibility and alignment of tasks with employee qualifications
3. Improved intergenerational and interdepartmental knowledge transfer

## Recommendations

To achieve these goals, we recommend the following structural reforms to strengthen mid-level academic career development at TUM and, in turn, the efficiency, quality and competitiveness of the university:

1. Restructure the mid-level career path to provide additional training in various tracks of expertise and, thus, a clear division of responsibilities:
  - a. Tracks in the areas of research, teaching, technical support, laboratory management and science management
  - b. Career development support through targeted training for postdocs and doctoral candidates
  - c. Permanent positions after the training period to ensure continuity in core activities
2. Introduce “Core Facilities” offering interdepartmental technical, scientific and management support in order to:
  - a. increase the efficiency of research and teaching,
  - b. reduce the dependence of employees on a single Chair/Professorship,
  - c. promote interdisciplinary collaboration and pool expert knowledge.
3. Require leadership training for TUM members in management positions to improve the effectiveness and satisfaction of all employees.
4. Increase the number of permanent positions in order to retain expertise at TUM and, in turn, increase knowledge transfer and the general quality of overarching activities, such as administration and teaching, at the university.
5. Introduce a (subject-specific) maximum number
  - a. doctoral candidates to supervising professors (or academic staff on permanent-contract) specializing in research (see No. 1), as well as of
  - b. non-professorial academic staff to administrative and technical staff in any given organizational unit.
6. Increase the attractiveness of university employment by expanding childcare, sports facilities, health care and other supplementary services to compensate for the pay gap relative to the private sector.
7. Create financial incentives through the consistent use of performance-related payments for particularly motivated employees in mid-level academic positions (BayBesG Art. 67 Performance Bonus or TVöD §18 Performance Remuneration).

*The points set out above were adopted as the official position of the TUM Graduate Council by its members, i.e. the elected representatives of the doctoral students, at their meeting on 6 May 2019.*