

A year of many small but significant successes

New Year speech by President Angela Ittel

15.12.2023

Dear members of TU Braunschweig,
dear colleagues, dear students,

the year 2023 was marked by many smaller yet significant successes for TU Braunschweig. Nevertheless, it was not an easy year: Many of you have, in one way or another, communicated to me that the current workload and pressure are quite high. We have initiated numerous key processes for our university. Simultaneously, the external demands on us are becoming increasingly challenging, and we are tired from the crisis-related strains of recent years. Against this backdrop, it is sometimes challenging for us to approach our tasks with calmness and composure and to face additional demands with confidence.

I take this feedback to heart, and I greatly appreciate that we can openly discuss our well-being at the university with each other. Only through such open communication can we develop together. Therefore, it is especially important to me this time to wish all of us a peaceful and restful time with our families and friends during the upcoming winter break and holiday season—a time to recharge our energy.

In 2024, our primary focus will be on internal matters. University-specific issues and our anchoring into the region will take center stage. For this exploration, we laid an excellent foundation in the past year, 2023. We embarked on a path where we could better understand ourselves – our strengths and potentials.

We have demonstrated that TU Braunschweig is an internationally attractive research hub: we are a robust partner for international collaborations and a sought-after workplace for international scholars. We have proven our ability to provide cutting-edge research infrastructures that are unique across Europe. Our researchers have showcased their expertise, contributing among other things to the successful acquisition of new Collaborative Research Centers and the extension of existing joint projects. We have managed to halt the significant decline in student numbers from recent years and are working diligently to streamline our administrative processes.

We can and should – despite our famous and notorious nordic modesty – take pride in these successes. They generate a unique momentum for our development. I want to encourage all of you to harness this dynamism to strategically position TU Braunschweig both structurally and substantively in the New Year!

Why is this important?

In the past few days, I have often discussed the tremendous competition that accompanies us. The coming year can play a crucial role in determining whether we can withstand the high external pressure as a research and educational institution. The primary framework within which this competition takes place is, of course, the Excellence Initiative. However, I want to take you on a journey to position our university for the future, regardless of whether we succeed in the Excellence Initiative.

In general, it will be crucial to overcome our internal boundaries, develop a strong collectively embraced identity, and focus on our strengths. I wish all of us, each and every one of you personally, success in achieving this goal, primarily for the benefit of our TU Braunschweig. I thank you for the fantastic work you have already done towards this end!

Now, I wish you a contemplative and restful Christmas season and joyful holidays. I look forward to many encounters with you in the New Year!