

# PRESS RELEASE

## Einstein Center Digital Future

### Berlin, June 22, 2023



## The Einstein Center Digital Future has a new Board of Directors

Members lead ECDF into second funding phase "Next Generation" with new research focuses

The members of the Einstein Center Digital Future have elected a new Board of Directors for a term of two years. The Board of Directors of the ECDF consists of five ECDF professors from the various Berlin universities, one representative of the associated scientists and one representative of the research assistants/postdocs. A member of the State Conference of Women's and Equal Opportunity Officers of the Berlin universities is also a member of the Board.

### Officially elected by the members of the ECDF are

- [Prof. Gesche Joost](#), Professor of Design Research, Berlin University of the Arts, representing the Associated Scientists of the ECDF.
- [Prof. Philipp Staab](#), Professor of Sociology of the Future of Work, Humboldt University Berlin, as representative for the professors of the ECDF
- [Prof. Tabea Flügge](#), Professor of Digital Technologies for the Reconstruction of Complex Facial Defects, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, representing the professors of the ECDF
- [Prof. Timm Teubner](#), Professor of Trust in Digital Services, Technische Universität Berlin, representing the professors of the ECDF
- [Prof. Andrea Cominola](#), Professor for Smart Water Networks, Technische Universität Berlin, as representative for the professors of the ECDF
- [Prof. Michelle Christensen](#), Professor of Open Science / Critical Culture, Technische Universität Berlin, representing the professors of the ECDF
- [Laura Rothfritz](#), research associate at the Chair of Information Management, Institute of Library and Information Science, Humboldt University Berlin, as representative for the PhDs and PostDocs of the ECDF
- [Dr. Christine Kurmeyer](#), Central Women's and Equal Opportunity Officer, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, delegated by the State Conference of Women's and Equal Opportunity Officers of Berlin Universities

In the inaugural meeting of the ECDF Board of Directors, Professor Gesche Joost was unanimously elected by the members as spokesperson of the ECDF: "I am very pleased to be able to open the second chapter of the ECDF success story together on the Board of Directors. Our mission is to shape the digital transformation in a sustainable, socially just and inclusive way. We are in the right place to do this in Berlin - being able to work in an international network with our excellent universities, companies and civil society is pure Berlin. A great scene and good coffee are on top of it," says Joost. Andrea Cominola and Timm Teubner were elected as her deputies. Joost succeeds Professor Odej Kao, who was ECDF spokesperson until March 2023.

## **New funding phase - New research priorities**

The new Board of Directors will lead the ECDF into the second funding phase "ECDF - Next Generation", which was approved by the Einstein Foundation Berlin in July 2022 and started on April 1, 2023. The members of the Board form a cross-section of the different scientific disciplines at ECDF, reflect the new focus areas of the second funding phase - Transforming Communities, Sustainable Cities and Digital Health - and represent the different universities involved in ECDF.

The area "**Transforming Communities**" reflects the mission of the ECDF to put digitalization at the service of people and society. Among other things, the scientists are concerned with strengthening social cohesion in the digital society, from the individual and his/her body to communities in the global south.

In the area of "**Integrated Health**", one of the topics will be the use of digital tools for networking medical professionals and patients. The professors will explore the question of how digital technologies can be used in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

"**Sustainable Cities**" will address the increasing demands on cities such as climate resilience, new governance models and social justice. Research will focus, for example, on how digital technologies can help build trust between citizens and policymakers, or how urban planners and engineers can use data, algorithms and IT systems to build resilient infrastructures and inclusive cities.

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The [Einstein Center Digital Future \(ECDF\)](#) is an interdisciplinary research center of Technische Universität Berlin, Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Berlin University of the Arts.

It sees itself as a cross-university nucleus for researching and promoting digital structures in science, business and society. The center creates links in the field of digitalization, develops new forms of collaboration, focuses on innovative interdisciplinary cutting-edge research, and attracts excellently trained young scientific talent to Berlin.

The first funding phase (2017-2023) of the ECDF was approved by the Einstein Foundation Berlin in 2016. Thanks to the public-private partnership funding instrument, in which the Berlin Senate, the Governing Mayor, scientific institutions and companies participate, 45 ECDF professors were appointed at Berlin universities and colleges during the first funding phase. In July 2022, after a successful evaluation by an international panel of experts, the Board of Directors of the Einstein Foundation decided that the ECDF will be funded for five more years until March 31, 2028. On April 1, 2023, the ECDF thus started its second funding phase "ECDF-Next Generation".

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