Rector Professor Eva Inés Obergfell takes office as rector of Leipzig University

Today, 1 April 2022, Professor Eva Inés Obergfell takes office as rector of Leipzig University. She succeeds Professor Beate Schücking, whose second term of office ended after eleven years on 31 March 2022. This makes Obergfell, a law professor, the second woman to head Leipzig University, which is more than 600 years old.

Professor Eva Inés Obergfell officially begins her five-year term as rector of Leipzig University today. “My esteemed colleague Professor Beate Schücking laid the foundation for this during the last eleven years of her tenure. I will build on this during my time as rector,” emphasised Obergfell, who is the second woman to lead the Alma mater Lipsiensis.

Science Minister Sebastian Gemkow has officially appointed Professor Eva Inés Obergfell as the new rector of Leipzig University. State Secretary Andrea Franke from the State Ministry of Science, Culture and Tourism presented the new rector with her appointment certificate today. “I know Leipzig University is in good hands with Professor Obergfell and I look forward to working with her in the coming years,” said Science Minister Sebastian Gemkow. “I am convinced that Professor Obergfell, as a versatile and highly competent scholar with an international network, will successfully steer the University’s fortunes, also in view of the preparations for the next round of the Excellence Initiative.” Gemkow noted that Professor Obergfell now heads one of the most innovative and modern universities, which is integrated into a passionate local community and the academic landscape of the Free State of Saxony, as well as having an excellent international network.

“I have set three main topics on which I will focus together with our lecturers, researchers and students as well as all staff members: Excellence development, talent development, campus development,” explains Rector Obergfell in a video message released today to mark the occasion. This hints at the structure of the three new vice-rectorates. The election of the new vice-rectors by the Senate is scheduled for April.

The University’s Extended Senate elected Professor Eva Inés Obergfell as the new rector on 23 November 2021. Before moving to Leipzig, the 50-year-old law professor held the Chair of Civil Law, Industrial Property Rights and Copyright, Private International Law and Comparative Law at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. From October 2016 to September 2021, she was responsible for teaching and studies as Vice President at the Humboldt-Universität. In the Berlin University Alliance (whose members are Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, and Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin), Obergfell was spokesperson of the Steering Committee for Cross-Cutting Theme 7, “Teaching and Learning”, from 2019 to 2021. As an elected member, she works for the Standing Committee on Teaching and Learning of the German Rectors’ Conference. She is also the director of the Humboldt research institute for property and copyright in democracy at the Faculty of Law at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

The investiture of Leipzig University’s new rector will be celebrated in the presence of the Minister President of the Free State of Saxony Michael Kretschmer on 23 June 2022 in the Paulinum.
“Let us exploit Leipzig University’s potential together. Come and talk to us, to me, to the new rectorate. I look forward to serving you, to serving Leipzig University.” This is how the new Rector Professor Eva Inés Obergfell ended her video message to the University community on her first day in office.

URL zur Pressemitteilung: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGseiqJMUBE Statement Prof. Dr. Eva Inés Obergfell
State Secretary Andrea Franke from the State Ministry of Science, Culture and Tourism presented Prof. Dr Eva Inés Obergfell with the certificate of appointment. 
Sabine Hülsmann, SMWK