

Global Business Anthropology Summit, Berlin

**Virtual Summit
June 14-18, 2021**

**Greetings and welcome
Prof. Dr. Günter M. Ziegler
Freie Universität President
14 June 2021, 16:10 CEST**

Dear esteemed guests

Dear students, researchers and colleagues

Dear Organizing team of the Global Business Anthropology Summit, Berlin2021

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Freie Universität Berlin, it is my great pleasure to welcome you today to the *Global Business Anthropology Summit*. Of course, I would be even more delighted to welcome you directly to our beautiful green campus in Dahlem, the Southwestern district of Berlin and I very much hope that we will be able to host you in Berlin in person soon.

Just a walking distance away from Freie Universität, various research institutions are located, including four Max Planck Institutes. Around the beginning of the 20th century, following Prussia's plans to establish a "German Oxford," Dahlem developed into a center for research of the highest caliber.

Talking of history, let me take the opportunity to introduce Freie Universität to you and to show what our university is particularly known for and distinguishes it to be a university of world class.

Internationalization is a central focus of Freie Universität since its founding more than 70 years ago – your summit reflects this tradition, which is evident in the number and diversity of the participants and this makes me particularly happy and excited for hosting you here.

Ever since its founding in 1948, internationality has played an important role in the university's research and teaching. International partners helped establish FUB in the 1940s. Therefore, the value of international networks is featured prominently in the university's

research and teaching. Over the years, the idea and lived reality of internationality has shaped the everyday experience of all university members and has been a key part of the university's remarkable history. For example, during the first and second phase of the German Excellence Initiative from 2007-2019, the FUB coined itself as "the International Network University", stressing the importance of working together across national boundaries and setting up structures and programs to support this very idea. This is evident in how we try to reach out to partners around the world.

With students and researchers from more than 100 countries (and a general percentage of 20% international students), we consider ourselves a flagship international university and we are proud of our network of partner institutions and individuals across the world which we bring together in various forms – for example also in international conferences like your Summit.

We assume responsibility on a regional, national, and global scale. We show our commitment to our founding principles and values "Veritas, Iustitia, Libertas" (Truth, Justice, and Liberty) by connecting and educating people across the world; by campaigning for a global development based on sustainability and social justice; by engaging with current global challenges and integrating global perspectives in its research and teaching; and by taking action for democracy and academic freedom and supporting persecuted and refugee academics through dedicated international programs.

Freie Universität Berlin is a cosmopolitan institution, and working internationally is an everyday experience. We believe that every member of the university – whether in research, teaching, or administration – must be given the chance and the ability to think transnationally and take responsibility for the global impact of their actions.

Several recent actions and existing networks structurally support our goals:

- Una Europa: a European alliance of eight leading universities, is rapidly becoming a dynamic force in testing and developing innovative cooperation formats in education, and research. Together we will create joint degree programs, research projects, and initiatives to shape the future of the European educational landscape.

- Freie Universität currently has strategic partnerships and transnational networks with six universities overseas. With these institutions we have strong ties and trusted relations to support the goals of Freie Universität Berlin through a variety of different focuses and instruments. As trusted partners, they also facilitate cutting-edge work on complex and innovative joint projects – from the pilot phase to full implementation.
- Our outreach is very strong and evident in the Freie Universität's network of liaison offices with current locations in Delhi, Cairo, Moscow, Beijing, and São Paulo. These offices are an invaluable pillar of our international strategy. The network helps to bring new, regionally specific expertise to the university and also assists in knowledge transfer globally. As local hubs, the offices act as first points of contact for people based in the respective regions who are interested in studying, researching, or otherwise working with Freie Universität.
- We are also proud of the internationalization measures implemented within the Berlin University Alliance, which is an alliance of Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. We set ourselves the long-term goal of jointly creating and shaping an integrated research environment in Berlin, and thus contributing to making Berlin a leading research hub in Europe. These are measures whose added value is derived from bundling the expertise of the Berlin University Alliance partners. As such, these measures complement those of Freie Universität.

Freie Universität Berlin sees itself now and in the future as an academic institution with global reach. Our new international strategy aims at creating a university that is fit for the future and can compete in the global arena when it comes to education and research, at playing our part in the expansion of global knowledge; and at strengthening the circulation of knowledge between different locations.

We are convinced that research is international by nature, as questions and hypotheses can only emerge out of a continuous flow of ideas and communication across borders.

Collaborative approaches and the free circulation of knowledge increase the outcomes,

reach, and impact of research. Therefore, we are committed to actively promote international joint research projects, both through partnerships with international institutions relevant to specific projects, and through supporting the international networks of individual researchers.

We also plan to help our staff to develop their international skills, by ongoing professionalization measures empowering them to contribute autonomously to the internationalization of our university.

We are convinced: A university that is future-proof must be international.

As the president of the FUB, I am delighted to host this *Global Business Anthropology Summit* that was initiated at Wayne State University in Detroit in 2018 in its first version in Europe and for the first time outside of the USA. This is an exciting moment when Business Anthropology is now introduced to Berlin and Germany, focusing on the success of doing anthropology with business and by this means also showing new career paths and new employment opportunities for graduates.

As John F. Kennedy already said during his visit of Freie Universität Berlin in June 1963: Freie Universität *“must be interested in turning out citizens of the world, men who comprehend the difficult, sensitive tasks that lie before us as free men and women, and men who are willing to commit their energies to the advancement of a free society”*.

I am particularly delighted that the *Global Business Anthropology Summit* is a great opportunity that links higher education with the practice by providing hands-on-training for organizing a summit, critically thinking and learning about the needs of businesses and their economical and socio-cultural worldviews.

As Freie Universität Berlin aims for building bridges across national boundaries, it also aims for bridging disciplines within the university in order to reflect contemporary world conditions, rapid changes, including the growth of the shared concerns around global climate change and sustainable habits for production, distribution and consumption of

goods and services. This is done while paying close attention to the needs of people and their societies in different parts around the world.

I warmly thank our Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology and the organizing team of this Summit, in particular the students of Freie Universität for their efforts and the initiative to bring the *Global Business Anthropology Summit* together under conditions of extreme challenge.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our esteemed guests, colleagues and students: I wish you all a great conference, interesting discoveries and exchanges at the intersection between research efforts, knowledge creation and practical application.

Thank you!

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