Background

Hasso Plattner Institute: A Unique Institute on the University Landscape

Status: January 2017

The Hasso Plattner Institute (HPI) is unique in the German university system:

- It is the only institute to offer a degree in "IT Systems Engineering" — an exceptionally "hands-on" computer science program.
- HPI's School of Design Thinking offers students from all disciplines an innovative supplementary program in the creative development of particularly user-friendly products and services.
- Via its Internet educational platform, openHPI.de, Hasso Plattner Institute offers all who are interested, from anywhere in the world, free, open online courses on information technology.
- Until now an affiliated institute of the University of Potsdam, from April 2017 on, HPI will become the first privately financed Faculty of a public university in Germany.

Founded in 1998, HPI has continued to receive outstanding scores in higher education rankings. For example, in the latest ranking conducted by the Centre for Higher Education (CHE), HPI again achieved the number 1 spot among computer science Master's programs in German-speaking countries.

The German Federal Government acknowledged the achievements of the Hasso Plattner Institute and its founder by holding its first national IT Summit at HPI in December 2006. HPI works with internationally renowned academic institutions, such as Stanford University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Technion in Israel, and universities in Cape Town, Nanjing, and Peking. On the industry side, some of HPI's important partners are: Microsoft, SAP, IBM, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Fujitsu, and ECM.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

HPI is a public-private partnership project, in which the state of Brandenburg provides the property for the institute buildings at Griebnitzsee in Potsdam-Babelsberg. The Institute is funded by the non-profit Hasso Plattner Foundation for Software Systems Engineering. The buildings were constructed in 2000 and expanded in 2005. A further building was opened in 2010.

In June 2016, Hasso Plattner announced plans to expand HPI into a Faculty for Digital Engineering at the University of Potsdam. Just five months later, the Senate of the University of Potsdam gave its consent to the project. As a result of the expansion, the construction of further new buildings is to be

undetaken. Besides the Master in "IT Systems Engineering," four additional Master degree programs will be launched. Over the course of the coming years, the number of students and professors is expected to double. Plattner's goal is to build up "domain knowledge" substantially. This refers to the in-depth knowledge in specific areas of application, such as medicine, big data and security.

Philanthropist Hasso Plattner had initially pledged to endow the foundation with more than €50 million of his own capital to fund the Institute's operations. Since then, his financial pledge has increased many times over.

530 STUDENTS, 12 PROFESSORS AND MORE THAN 50 TEACHERS

Over 980 students have earned a Bachelor's degree and more than 540 a Master's degree since the program began in winter semester 1999/2000. 115 students have finished their doctoral project to earn a PhD, with one project also completed for a postdoctoral university degree with lecture qualification (*Habilitationsprojekt*). There are approximately 100 PhD projects in progress at this time. At HPI students learn to understand, develop, and master the intricacies of sophisticated IT systems and software products. They acquire the skills they need to take on top-level positions in the IT industry, such as software architect, project coordinator, or Chief Technology Officer (CTOs). One of HPI's main goals is to foster an engineering culture in the field of IT systems engineering. At HPI there are a total of twelve professors and more than 50 additional lecturers, visiting professors, and contract teachers. The professors at HPI are usually appointed in consultation with the University of Potsdam. Students are enrolled at the University of Potsdam and receive an internationally accredited Bachelor of Science or Master of Science degree when they graduate. The collaboration between the non-profit Hasso Plattner Institute for Software systems Engineering GmbH and the University of Potsdam is governed by a contractual agreement.

IDEAL CONDITIONS FOR STUDYING AND WORKING

The Institute in Potsdam is a pioneer in its field and its outstanding technical and structural facilities, along with its excellent student-teacher ratio, enable it to provide the high-flyers of tomorrow with optimal study and research conditions. The education is tuition-free. Personal mentoring for all students is one of the Institute's top priorities. First-year students — around 80 of the best-qualified applicants admitted each fall — participate in a special parallel seminar so they can easily familiarize themselves with their new study environment. Students who are accepted into the Master's program (a maximum of 60 places are available annually) receive personal academic guidance from a professor as mentor.

FROM LECTURE HALL TO EXECUTIVE CHAIR:
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT HPI

Students enrolled in the IT Systems Engineering program at Hasso Plattner Institute receive more than an education in becoming a software architect, project leader, or scientist. HPI gives its students the skills they need on the path to self-employment, based on their own business idea. Teaching and research form the foundation for additional hands-on offers, such as workshops and a business plan competition. And, if there is already a business idea in the minds of the students and graduates, they can use a co-working space, furnished for them, and benefit from individual coaching. For the successful establishment of a company, there is also the possibility of obtaining financial assistance through the HPI Seed Fund. In the meantime, HPI graduates from the fields of IT Systems Engineering and Design Thinking have established approximately 100 companies. The majority of them are based in Berlin or Potsdam. The start helper in many cases is also the venture capital provider: Hasso Plattner Ventures.

HPI RESEARCH SCHOOL

Since October 2005, the HPI's Research School for *Service-Oriented Systems Engineering* has offered a PhD program modeled on the German Research Foundation's (DFG) Research Training Groups. Every year up to eight new PhD students and up to two new post-docs are admitted and awarded a scholarship. In April 2009 the Research School opened a branch at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, where ten PhD students are currently working on research projects. In 2010 another branch was opened in Haifa at Technion, with 13 Israeli PhDs as part of the research team. In November 2011 the "HPI Research School at Nanjing University" was added, with eight doctoral candidates pursuing research work. The circle of HPI Research School members has thus increased to a total of 60 highly-talented junior researchers from around the world.

HPI FUTURE SOC LAB

The new top level research facility, HPI Future SOC Lab, provides a platform for researching how the potential of the newest multicore computer architectures, combined with massive, operating in parallel software, can be exploited. The lab was opened in mid-June 2010. The latest hard- and software, straight from the R&D departments of large IT corporations, enables HPI scientists and guest experts from other academic institutions to research new concepts and trends in future Service-Oriented Computing (SOC) under real–life conditions. It is a central assumption that in this context, future software applications will be run by service providers, rather than in companies' in–house data centers or by end users as is the case now. Included in HPI's infrastructure is a 1,000 core computer cluster.

HPI SCHOOL OF DESIGN THINKING

The HPI School of Design Thinking — established in 2007 —annually provides 240 students, from all academic disciplines, an opportunity to work in multidisciplinary teams and develop especially user-friendly, IT-related products and services. HPI works closely in this endeavor with one of America's leading academic institutions: Stanford University in Palo Alto and its Hasso Plattner Institute of Design. In November 2008 the two schools launched a joint innovation research program. In recent years, Design Thinking has spread from Palo Alto and Potsdam throughout the world. With multiple partners worldwide, for example in China and Malaysia, the Hasso Plattner Institute cooperates in Design Thinking education. Via its HPI Academy, the Institute also offers professional education in Design Thinking and in other fields — particularly those related to information technology.

openHPI — INNOVATIVE INTERNET LEARNING PLATFORM

Since September 2012, openHPI.de — the new Internet learning platform, embedded in a global social network — has offered free, interactive online courses on different information technology topics. Everyone is welcome to take part in the open online courses, and thereby to unlock a new world of knowledge. Participants can become familiar with basic current topics in IT, computer science, and IT Systems Engineering. They also have the benefit of discussing issues and developing solutions with other participants from around the globe.

Further information:
http://hpi.de/de/presse/presseinformationen.html

Press contact: presse@hpi.de
Press Spokesperson: Christiane Rosenbach: christiane.rosenbach@hpi.de
Tel. 0331/5509-119