

Background

Hasso Plattner: Successfully Linking Science and Business

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Prof. Hasso Plattner (born January 21, 1944 in Berlin) has been successfully linking business and science for decades. He is known for his achievements as the co-founder of SAP – with its more than 66,000 employees worldwide – as well as for his social commitment, both of which endeavors are as exceptional as they are exemplary. The recipient of numerous awards, Plattner has recently been honored in the U.S. with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the German American Business Association (GABA).

Plattner, a native of Berlin, majored in communications engineering at the University of Karlsruhe and graduated with an advanced degree in engineering. In 1990, the University of Saarbrücken awarded Plattner an honorary doctorate. Four years later the university appointed him honorary professor of business information technology. In 1998 the University of Saarland gave him the title of Honorary Senator. Plattner is also a member of the Board of Trustees at Stanford University. Since 2002 he has held an honorary doctorate from the University of Potsdam, where he was granted an honorary professorship in 2004. In February 2016 he was awarded the Heinrich Hertz Guest Professorship by the University of Karlsruhe and the President of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

Plattner sees Potsdam, Brandenburg's state capital, as "an ideal location for future-oriented research and teaching, not least because of the unique appeal of the Havelland region with its beautiful landscape and historic heritage." The SAP co-founder and former chairman of the board made this statement when announcing the founding of the Hasso Plattner Institute of Software Systems Engineering (HPI) in the summer of 1998. Plattner has not only financed the HPI ever since, he has also made a personal commitment as head of the "Enterprise Platform and Integration Concepts" research and teaching department. His initiative has facilitated a number of groundbreaking innovations. The most recent example is HPI's research into in-memory data management (a project Plattner personally oversaw) that led to the creation of HANA, a product of the SAP software corporation. In 2012, this technology received both the German Innovation Award and the Berlin-Brandenburg Innovation Award.

The promotion of future-oriented research, innovation and entrepreneurship is particularly important to HPI's dedicated patron and founder. The HPI Research School was founded in 2005. This interdisciplinary doctoral program

now has “branches” at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, at the Technion in Israel, and at Nanjing University in China. This was followed in 2010 by the establishment of the top-level research facility HPI Future SOC Lab. It provides scientists and researchers from all over the world with an infrastructure of the latest hardware and software for research purposes at no cost.

In 2007, Plattner expanded the HPI with the addition of the HPI School of Design Thinking. This is where students in advanced stages of their studies can learn to develop innovative products and services within multidisciplinary teams. In the meantime, there is also a joint Design Thinking research program with leading U.S. university Stanford; in 2005, Plattner donated funding for the establishment of a Hasso Plattner Institute of Design Thinking there. For his engagement in the area of Design Thinking, Plattner received the German Design Award in 2016.

Also in 2005, Plattner increased his involvement in Potsdam by financing a business incubator and venture capital fund (Hasso Plattner Ventures, www.hp-ventures.com) to support young entrepreneurs in the IT sector. In spring 2011, the SAP co-founder and chairman of the supervisory board announced the establishment of the first innovation center in Potsdam. The SAP Innovation Center (www.sap-innovationcenter.com) works closely with HPI. In 2007 and 2011, Plattner also lent his financial support to the construction of Potsdam’s City Palace, making possible an accurate reconstruction of the copper roof and the façade.

In 2012, Plattner launched another educational innovation at HPI in Potsdam – a novel kind of social learning network. Via the online learning platform www.openhpi.de anyone in the world can participate in open, free-of-charge courses in information technology at HPI. In the meantime, over 273,000 enrollments have been registered at openHPI from nearly 118,000 users and approximately 180 countries. More than 35,000 certificates have also already been issued to successful learners.

Also in 2012, Hasso Plattner announced plans to build a museum in Potsdam (<http://museum-barberini.com>). To this end, Plattner made the decision to have Barberini Palace, which was destroyed in World War II, reconstructed as a museum. Prominent guests at the opening of the museum on 20 January 2017 include Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The art collection of Hasso Plattner, which focuses on French impressionists and painters from the former GDR, will now have its own residence. Changing international exhibitions at the museum will further highlight the Potsdam art scene. The museum also plans an educational concept for children and teenagers.

Previous honors and awards

The Jewish Museum Berlin awarded Professor Hasso Plattner the 2016 “Award for Understanding and Tolerance,” honoring his engagement for a peaceful and respectful co-existence. In 2012, Plattner was awarded the Global Benefactor Award by the Churchill Club in the U.S. In 2010, he was awarded the AmCham Transatlantic Partnership Award in Berlin. In 2007, the Brandenburg state government honored him with its Order of Merit. In 2006, U.S. magazine *Time* named Plattner one of the “heroes” of the past 60 years. The Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities honored Plattner with the Leibniz Medal in 2005. That same year, popular German science magazine *P.M.* named him its Innovation Patron of the Year. In 2001, Plattner received the Federal Republic’s Order of Merit. Also in 2001, he topped *Time Europe’s* list of the most important and influential people in IT. After receiving the prestigious Information Technology Leadership Award for Global Integration in 1997, Plattner was granted a place in *Manager* magazine’s Hall of Fame the following year.

Further information:

<http://hpi.de/en/presse/presseinformationen.html>

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