



# Strategic Partnerships at Freie Universität Berlin

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# WHO WE ARE

# Who We Are

- one of Germany's 11 Universities of Excellence
- founded in 1948, with strong international orientation
- 32,000 students, app. 500 professors
- 66 bachelor's, 110 master's, 23 structured doctoral programs
- 11 Departments plus Charité – University Medicine Berlin (joint faculty with the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)



# International students & staff

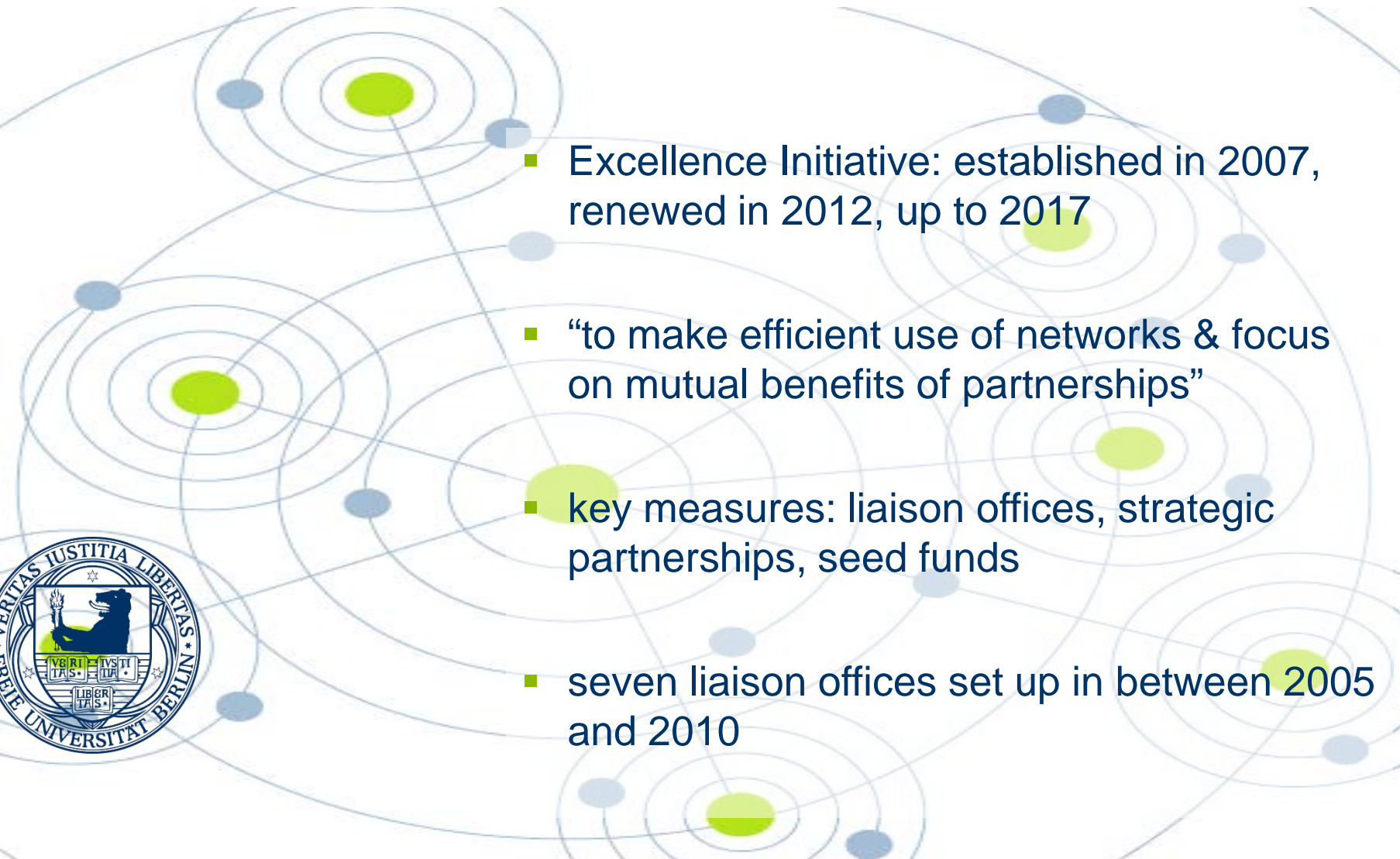
## Currently from abroad:

- 8 % of the students in **bachelor's** programs
- 17 % of the students in **master's** programs
- 31 % of the **doctoral** candidates
- 10 % of the **professors**
- In Germany the first choice for **fellows** of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, no. one for incoming Erasmus students, no. one for DAAD scholars
- More than 100 **partnerships** with universities around the world in 67 countries plus Erasmus Agreements with over 350 universities in Europe



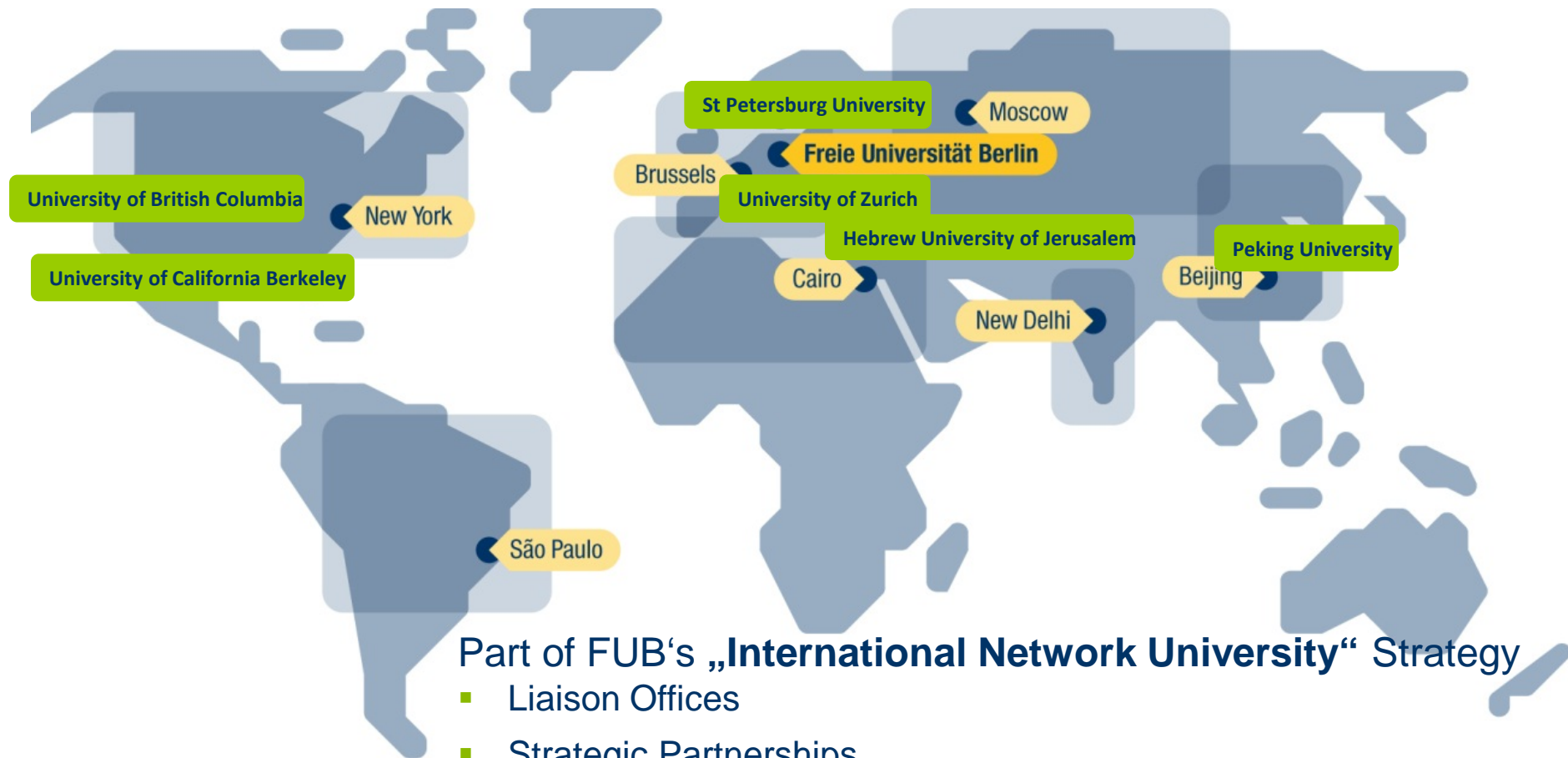


# International Network University

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- Excellence Initiative: established in 2007, renewed in 2012, up to 2017
  - “to make efficient use of networks & focus on mutual benefits of partnerships”
  - key measures: liaison offices, strategic partnerships, seed funds
  - seven liaison offices set up in between 2005 and 2010



# Strategic Focus on Internationalization



Part of FUB's „International Network University“ Strategy

- Liaison Offices
- Strategic Partnerships
- Strategic Unit: Center for International Cooperation
- Funding for internationalization measures

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

# What is a Strategic Partnership for us?

Suggested definition in the IIE/FUB survey\*:

“A strategic partnership is a **formal alliance** between two or more higher education institutions developed through an **intentional process** whereby the partners **share resources** and leverage **complementary strengths** to achieve defined **common objectives**. Strategic cooperation is tied to the strategic goals and objectives of an academic unit, college, or the university as a whole. It indicates a **multi-dimensional engagement** between the involved institutions and implies the joint undertaking of a **diverse range of activities**.”

\*online survey on international strategic partnerships conducted by the Institute of International Cooperation (New York) in cooperation with Freie Universität Berlin, Jan-March 2015



# Strategic Partnerships – Means to an end, not an end in itself

## Objectives:

- deliver additional quality & opportunities for research and teaching
- deliver complementary strengths
- promote sustainable research cooperation
- provide attractive options for students, early-career researchers and established faculty
- increase international co-publications
- increase FUB's visibility in specific regions and globally

**Question: Which partners and in which regions are the right ones?**

**Answer: Identify particularly synergetic partnerships in particular regions.**

# Identification Process

## Top-down

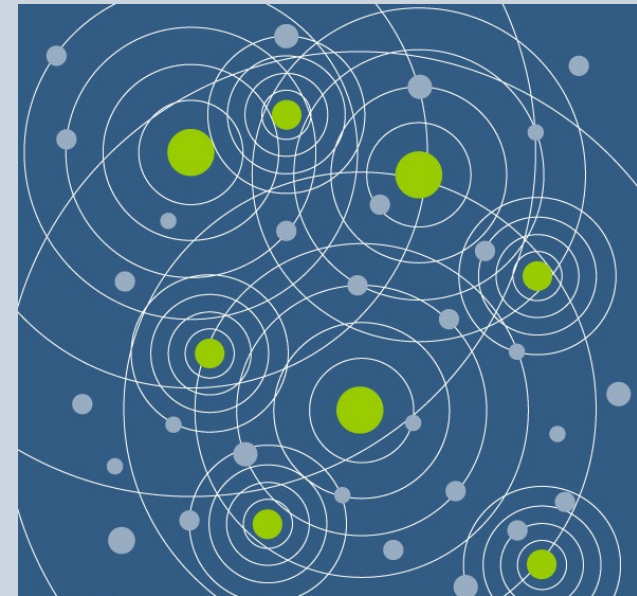
- focus on regions/countries with high and/or growing research potential
- SPs must mirror faculties' research interest
- partnerships should have a history of collaboration at min. 3 departments
- availability of funding opportunities should be taken into consideration
- process managed by a central unit (Center for International Cooperation)



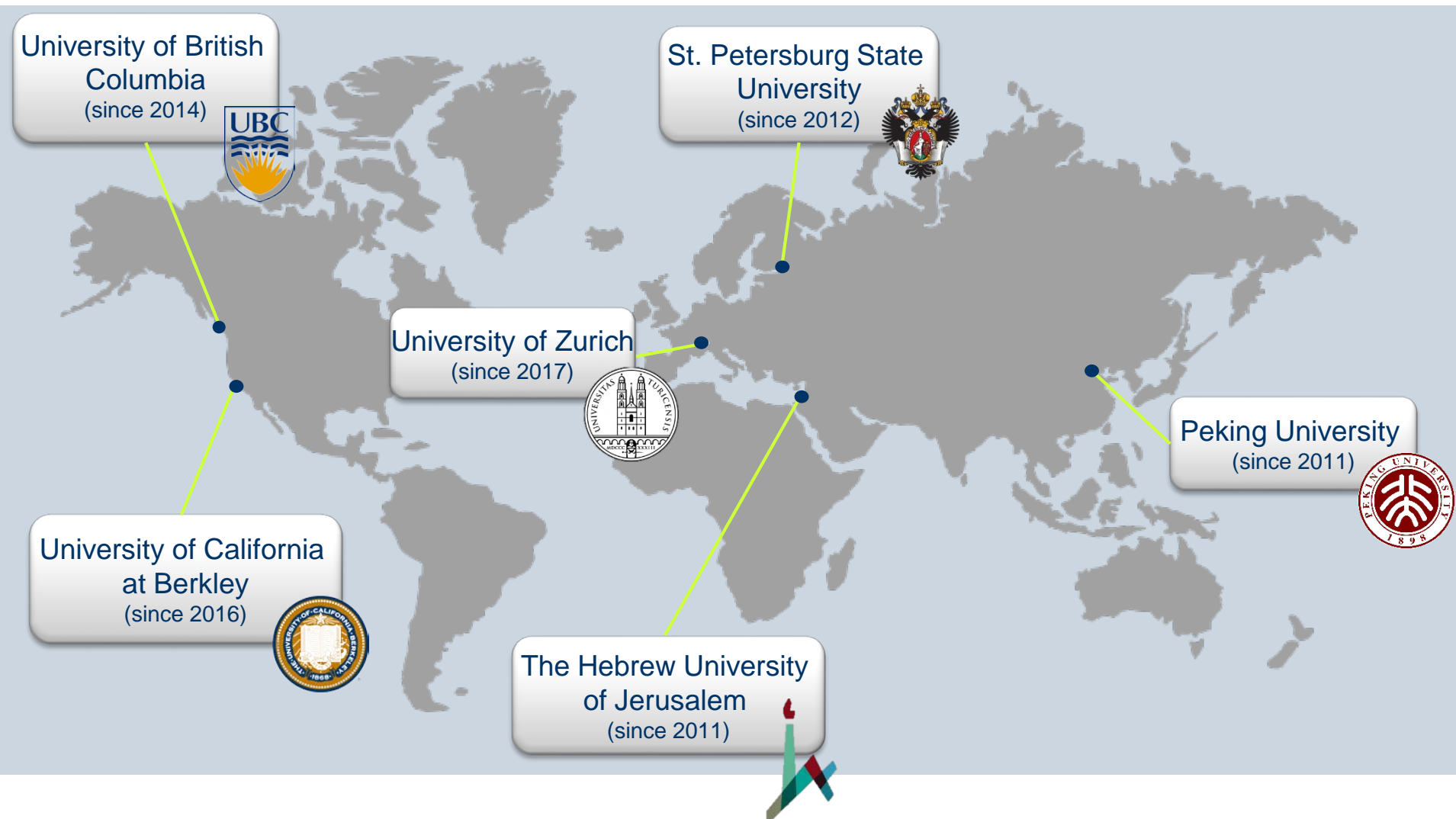
# Identification Process

## Bottom-up

- Target Agreements: Departments map their international activities and develop their own internationalisation agendas
- Consultation process with Deans
- **Analysis of existing partnerships** (level of activity, mobility, etc)
- Analysis of third party funded research projects (FUB database)
- Analysis of research output (co-publications), where data available
- Analysis of incoming guest scholars / fellows



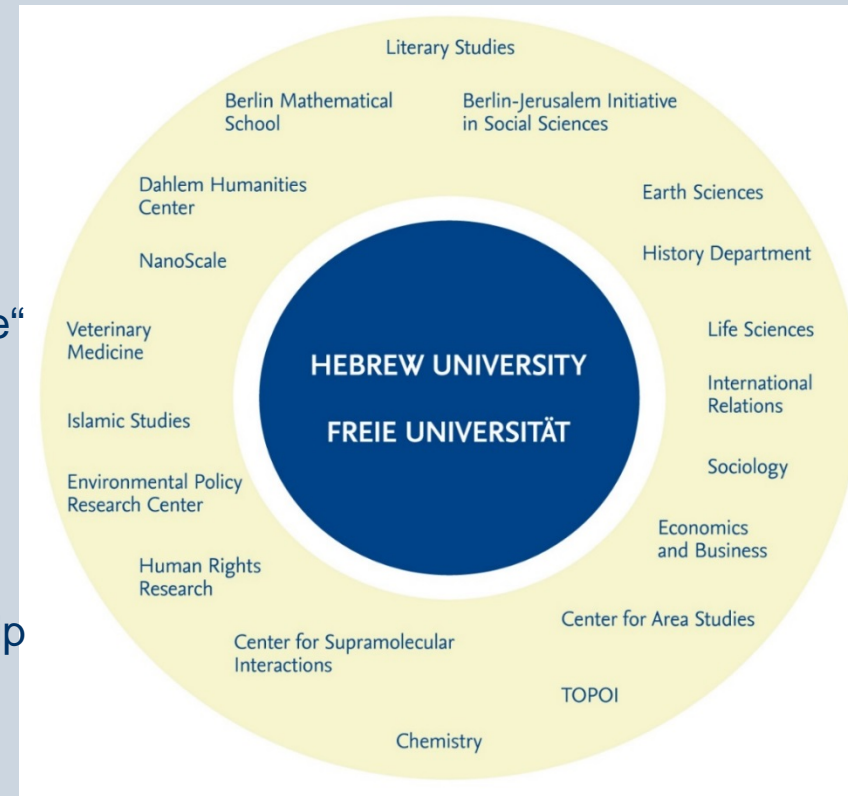
# Strategic Partnerships of Freie Universität



# Example: Strategic Partnership FUB – HUJI

**Current joint activities involving approx. 100 researchers from FUB und HUJI**

- Joint research projects / joint publications
- Joint Seed Money Fund
- Joint PhD agreement
- Joint PostDoc Fellowships
- Joint PhD Program „Human Rights Under Pressure“
- Joint annual PhD workshops
- Joint initiative in online education
- Student exchange
- Faculty mobility
- Erasmus+
- Regular consultations between university leadership
- Administrative staff exchange
- Joint press releases / marketing
- Joint fundraising





# Managing Strategic Partnerships

**Joint „governance“ structures/processes and joint coordination based on underlying notion of joint ownership & mutual benefit**

- A cross-unit task: Involves Research Dpt, International Office, Academic/Student Affairs, University Leadership, Press & Communication, Techtransfer Unit, Legal office, etc
- Administrative coordinators assigned to communicate, manage and monitor development
- Academic coordinators assigned to serve as champions of strategic partnership
- Seed money funds / annual calls for proposals
- Administrative staff exchange to facilitate understanding of partner's administration and system



# Outcomes / Questions

## Observations so far:

- Steadily growing number of joint projects and initiatives in research and teaching
- Growing number of involved faculty, often in unexpected fields
- Increasing number of admin individuals or units directly involved in SP
- Results in terms of additional research projects incl. publications can be seen
- FUB's bilateral strategic partnerships begin to show tendencies for triangular or multilateral schemes

## Questions:

- More partners (Europe?) / how many SP's do we want and need?
- Sustainability of measures beyond the Initiative of Excellence?
- Role of SP's in joint application of Berlin Universities for Universities of Excellence funding line?
- Systematic measurement of results?

**Thank you very much for  
your attention!**

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