



30 July 2019

Dear colleagues, dear alumni and alumnae,

It is my pleasure to invite you to the 4th Max Planck Symposium for Alumni and Early Career Researchers, taking place 1st to 4th September 2019 at the Harnack House in Berlin.

"Alumni careers are diverse and by no means predictable". This quote by Vice President Angela Friederici during the opening of last year's Max Planck Symposium perfectly summarizes why it is important for the Max Planck Society to develop platforms for its alumni and early career researchers to meet and network. The Max Planck Alumni Association is up to this date the most important lever to foster lifelong Max Planck connections across institutes and across our three sections. I am impressed by the Association's effort and enthusiasm and this year's program as well as the current status of registration gives evidence of the Association's successful outreach: Already now, alumni have registered who will be travelling from places as far as New Zealand to re-join the Max Planck community – Welcome back!

Upon suggestion of our alumni and early career researchers, the motto of this year's symposium will be "Climate, Sustainability and what Diversity has got to do with it". It will shine a light on careers of Max Planck alumni who are active in these fields and contribute to imperative societal questions. We are happy to welcome a diverse array of Max Planck alumni from both International Committees and NGOs as well as industrial big players to start-ups to discuss and network together with our alumni and early career researchers on career paths in Climate and Environmental Research.



Although in principle open to any alumni and early career researchers of the Max Planck Society, participation to the symposium will be limited to ensure a productive working atmosphere and a most stimulating experience for everyone. We will therefore ask all registrants to emphasize their specific interest in the Symposium within a short questionnaire and the final participants will be selected on the basis of their answers. You are also welcome to add a specific workshop topic during registration in case it doesn't already appear on the preliminary agenda and we will help find a professional co-chair for your workshop to make the most of your input.

We have already received a multitude of registrations but continue to invite online registrations until 16th August 2019:

www.mpg.de/symposium2019

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the meeting this year, but I will deliver my welcome address via (live) video. However, I hope to be able to participate next year in person!

In 2018, we established a new HR department at the General Headquarters in Munich. This department will focus on leadership training and career development within the MPG, but also it will further conceptualize alumni work on the level of the whole Max Planck Society. So I hope that at your next annual meeting in 2020, I can share with you some "work in progress" regarding centralized alumni measures. These measures should, in the future, complement the successful work of the Max Planck Alumni Association.

Kind regards and see you soon (virtually!),



Martin Stratmann