

German Cancer Research Center once more certified as a family friendly employer

The German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) has once again been awarded the certificate “audit berufundfamilie” (“audit work and family”). The non-profit organization “berufundfamilie GmbH” established by the Hertie Foundation awards this certificate to employers who pursue a sustainable human resource policy which is particularly family friendly. The certificate was presented on 11 June 2012 in Berlin by Dr. Hermann Kues, Parliamentary State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, and Peter Hintze, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Economics and Technology.

“The certificate is both a distinction and an obligation for us,” commented Professor Otmar D. Wiestler, Chairman of the Management Board of DKFZ. “Family and career have become part of a rewarding life for men and women alike. Combining the two is a great challenge in which we want to support our employees. We are aware that we have to continuously work on providing the appropriate conditions for this. The audit has once again confirmed that we are on the right track.”

The audit “berufundfamilie (“work and family”) is a long-term process which comprises annual reports and re-audits after three years to assess whether envisioned goals have been achieved.

DKFZ was awarded the basic certificate “berufundfamilie” already in 2005; the first re-audit took place in 2009. On this basis, a project group headed by DKFZ’s equal opportunities officer, Dr. Karin Greulich-Bode, has now compiled a package of measures which will help to make DKFZ’s human resource policy even more family friendly. Moreover, measures will be taken to make it easier for women to enter into leadership positions.

“Since the last award in 2009, we have been able to achieve a number of improvements,” says Karin Greulich-Bode. “A mentoring program for women who have undertaken or are currently undertaking a ‘Habilitation’ contributes to increasing the percentage of women in leading positions, and new workshops offer multiple assistance for the task of combining work and care of family members. We also offer special assistance to employees recruited from abroad and their families.” Furthermore, the in-house childcare program will be extended to include school children within the next three years. Greulich-Bode continued that, all these achievements notwithstanding, DKFZ will not cease to campaign for more family awareness and consideration of the needs of employees with children or family members in need of care.

About 1,000 employers in Germany currently have the audit certificate “berufundfamilie“ or “familiengerechte hochschule” (“family friendly university”) respectively. These include 490 corporations, 379 institutions, and 129 universities. They are regarded as pioneers of family friendly human resource policies and practices, since they offer significantly better family friendly possibilities than the average employer in Germany.

The audit, which is under the patronage of Federal Family Minister Dr. Kristina Schröder and Federal Minister of Economics Dr. Philipp Rösler, is a strategic management tool to support employers in their efforts to strike a sound, economically attractive balance between corporate goals and employee interests.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 2,500 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. The staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. The center is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers. Ninety percent of its funding comes from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

Dr. Stefanie Seltmann
Head of Press and Public Relations
German Cancer Research Center
Im Neuenheimer Feld 280
D-69120 Heidelberg
T: +49 6221 42 2854
F: +49 6221 42 2968
presse@dkfz.de