

I. Mission Statement

Mission Statement

1. Who we are

The General Student Committee (AStA) at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is the democratically legitimized student representation for all students. As part of the constituted student body, we represent the interests of us students at the central level towards the university, politics, and society. Our legitimacy and capacity to act derive from the Student Parliament (StuPa), to which we are accountable.

We see ourselves as an active platform for student participation and self-administration – politically as well as socially and culturally.

2. Our Values

As the AStA, we stand for:

- democratic principles, diversity of opinion, and transparency,
- social justice and sustainability
- international accessibility and cultural diversity,
- intersectionality and diversity,
- anti-fascism, anti-militarism, and international solidarity,
- feminism and equal treatment of all genders.

These values guide our actions, our political approach, and our cooperation with students and committees.

2. Vision

We strive for a democratic university for all; for self-determined studies and a student body in which everyone, regardless of origin, status, or identity, is heard and represented.

The university should be a place of critical thinking, cultural and social exchange, where studying and university life are more than just a process of obtaining a degree.

3. Our Mission

Our mission is to actively shape higher education policy, influence discourse on relevant issues, and promote a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive campus community. We are a space for exchange and engagement.

We strive for

- a campus that is a political, social, and cultural space,
- a university that shares our values,
- appropriate student participation,
- sustainable and socially just structures for students,
- excellent study conditions.

4. Our tasks and working methods

a) Representation of interests and political work

We represent the interests of students:

- in university policy discussions and decision-making processes,
- in accordance with our responsibilities under Baden-Württemberg's higher education law and the resolutions of the StuPa, and
- towards the academic self-administration of KIT, the university administration, and the city of Karlsruhe as well as by participating in regional and supraregional committees and networks.

b) Individual support

We offer and coordinate structures that directly support students:

- general and specific counseling services,
- financial assistance for students in need,
- affordable mobility options, leisure activities, and improving the quality of student life.

c) Culture, exchange, and community life

The AStA creates spaces for student culture, political education, encounters, and reflection. These include:

- various event formats,
- platforms for exchange,
- projects that enrich campus life,
- strengthening student initiatives and university groups through infrastructure, material and financial subsidies.

5. Our cooperation and working principles

Our work is based on transparent, appreciative, and respectful interaction with one another. We attach great importance to low-threshold communication, openness to new ideas, and the continuous development of processes and structures. An open and constructive culture of error management forms the basis for joint learning and growth.

We regularly review our structures and working methods in order to strengthen responsibility and improve our cooperation in the long term. Our departments work independently, but support each other and consciously pay attention to existing capacities. Important decisions are made jointly in meetings.

We communicate closely and reliably with the departmental student committees and other committees of the student body. Together, we are committed to solidarity and responsible student self-administration.

1. General

1.1 Advice and support for students

Students increasingly find themselves in a difficult situation, characterized by financial burdens, high pressure to perform, and social uncertainties. At the same time, existing support services offered by the university, Studierendenwerk, and the state are often inadequately communicated, meaning that many students are unaware of their rights and options. The AStA therefore sees itself as a central, low-threshold advice and support structure. A particular focus is on advising international students, who are often confronted with additional legal and linguistic hurdles. In addition, the AStA offers social counseling on topics such as financing, housing, and work. In cases of discrimination, abuse of power, or sexual harassment, the relevant departments can provide individual and confidential support to students. In addition, the AStA organizes informational meetings with a lawyer to clarify legal issues at an early stage.

These services will not only be maintained in the coming year, but will also be systematically evaluated (this has already begun) and further developed in line with needs in order to improve support for the student body in the long term.

The AStA website is also a key information tool in this regard. During this term of office, we want to begin migrating content from the old website to the new one. The new website will primarily serve to bundle and communicate information for students on behalf of the VS.

- Central, low-threshold counseling and support structure
- Needs-based further development of the counseling structure
- Improvement of the digital information offering by setting up the new AStA website

1.2 Political education

The political education of the student body should be fostered. This is an important step in strengthening students' self-efficacy. The aim of the AStA is to support students in this regard.

The AStA creates open spaces for political exchange and discourse in which all students can participate. Information events on current topics that affect students are also part of our responsibility – for example, currently providing information on how to deal with the newly introduced military service and conscription requirements and the associated options of action available to students.

In political education, we place particular emphasis on topics that the student body has defined as important, including equal opportunities, anti-fascism, and sustainability. For example, in order to achieve equal opportunities, it is necessary to highlight structural inequalities and identify ways to counteract them.

In addition, students should receive information about opportunities for political participation. This includes providing information about political events that address issues relevant to students, as well as actively participating in political events such as discussion groups, lectures, or demonstrations.

- Promoting self-efficacy - students are empowered to identify their interests and actively participate in shaping society and campus life.

- Creating spaces for discourse - the AStA offers open platforms for exchange and information on current political issues relevant to students.
- Focus on social justice - targeted education on structural inequalities in the areas of equal opportunities, anti-fascism, and sustainability.

1.3 Low-threshold involvement and new active members

The student body thrives on committed students. Without this commitment, our numerous offerings cannot be maintained. However, the hurdle for joining the AStA can seem high, as there are hardly any structures for low-threshold involvement, only the elected departments with a high level of responsibility. Our goal is now to create permanent structures that allow for easy entry into volunteer work at AStA. Interested students should be able to get involved in a specific topic or project without immediately taking on the responsibility of an entire department. In the long term, this should increase the number of students active in the AStA and create a gradual path to more responsibility. It is hoped that this will relieve the burden on current representatives, enable new and more measures to be implemented or offers to be made, and secure the next generation of representatives for the departments in the long term.

As a first step, work has already begun on reviving the “extended AStA.” Here, students can get involved in specific departments, topics, or projects. The next step is to establish and promote new working groups. The Sustainable Transformation Working Group, formerly the Sustainability Council, which is closely affiliated with the Department for Social-Ecological Transformation, serves as a model for this. Without any long-term commitment, students can collaborate on the department's topics. The working group has produced, among other things, a position paper on mobility at KIT, a position on education for sustainable development, the monthly Repair Café at the AKK, and the annual Sustainability Schlonz. In addition, the working group has always been able to fill the topic-related committees and replace members of the department.

Initially, new working groups on the topics of interculturality, political education, and volunteer work/university groups are planned. These, together with the existing working groups and other opportunities for involvement, will be advertised at the beginning of each semester.

- Create low-threshold entry points into AStA involvement, with the opportunity to gradually take on more responsibility and eventually take over a department
- New working groups on interculturalism, political education, and university groups, which will be promoted together with existing working groups

2. Agenda of our departments

2.1 Chair

The Chair supports and promotes the work of all board members, employees, and other volunteers in the board environment by not only creating bureaucratic frameworks, but also by working together with everyone involved in the AStA to strengthen a productive, open-minded, and appreciative working environment: the AStA as a place where people want to get involved – a place where you can change things together.

To achieve this, we need a stronger sense of togetherness in the AStA, despite the individual and autonomous work of the departments. To this end, knowledge and formal hierarchies must also be broken down, e.g., the division of department leads into those with primary responsibility and those with secondary responsibility, and individual challenges must be addressed in personal exchanges.

In this context, we continue to advocate for adequate space for the executive board and an upgrade of the containers. We have a responsibility to create a safe and pleasant working atmosphere, especially for our employees.

We will also continue to drive forward the digitization of our processes. By digitizing our personnel files, we want to gain initial experience and use this to formulate a strategy for digitizing other processes. The aim here is not only to avoid paper files, but also to create real added value by improving our processes. This will also enable us to better address data protection requirements.

In the area of data protection, we need to build up more expertise and raise awareness within the VS. As a first step, there will be in-house data protection training for all VS committees with a web presence.

Negotiations on a new “Qualipakt” agreement also fall within the current term of office. Here, we are advocating for an increase in the available budget to the total quality assurance funds allocated by the state (by approximately 15%). Furthermore, a small portion of the budget should not be used for traditional tutorial funding in order to maintain a certain potential for innovation. In addition, a regulation for the medium-term reassessment of the stabilized funds should be established.

Finally, we have been able to recruit several new employees over the past two months—their training and integration into the VS will continue into the next year.

- Pursuing our mission statement and general goals
- Promoting a productive, open-minded, and appreciative working environment in the AStA
- Taking the first steps in the area of digitalization
- Raising awareness for data protection
- Finding suitable premises for the VS
- New Qualipakt agreement

2.2 Finances

The Finance Department is primarily an operational department that can only carry out a few projects in the traditional sense. The Finance Department will primarily handle day-to-day business and applications, while training the newly hired financial assistant. The next fiscal year will be planned and the current fiscal year will be processed, particularly in the period from December 25 to March 26. After that, the focus will be on processing outstanding issues in the form of unfinished annual accounts and auditing them in cooperation with the Finance Committee. At the same time, we want to further develop the financial database so that student council treasurers can access it, in order to simplify coordination with them.

In addition, the backlog of the associations (SSV and UStA Kasse e.V.) will also be processed, and the UStA will carry out the budget processing for the upcoming Unifest in the summer.

We hope that the partnership with the “Studentisches Kulturzentrum am KIT gGmbH” will streamline the application process for university groups, and we are closely monitoring the negotiations with the KVV and the city of Karlsruhe on the topic of mobility in the context of asset and contribution development.

- Budget planning
- Review of past fiscal years
- Management of the SSV and UStA association finances
- Further development of the financial database
- Exploration of changing banks for VS accounts

2.3 Internal Affairs

The Internal Affairs Department is primarily responsible for internal organization and information exchange within the student body. Central to this is constant and effective communication with the student councils, via the FSK and AStA reports, as well as transparency of AStA activities through regular publication of minutes.

Since the Internal Affairs Department has been newly staffed and currently lacks experience, our first priority is to reliably handle core tasks such as communication via the FSK and committee administration. Concrete projects are therefore not yet planned, but we want to focus more on establishing a more direct exchange with the student councils.

In order to simplify the training of internal affairs officers in the future, we are centrally documenting necessary information and modified departmental tasks in order to create a clear how-to guide.

- Committee administration
- Issuing volunteer certificates
- AStA reports
- Participation in FSK meetings
- Direct contact person for departmental student committees, KIT committees and Studierendenwerk committees

2.4 Social

We are committed to the social and financial interests of students, especially those who are currently in a particularly precarious situation. This includes first-generation academics, students with children, and international students. That is why we are fighting for the abolition of all tuition fees, better working conditions for student employees, better financial aid for all, and affordable housing.

Together with our social advisor, we are continuing to offer Freitische (free cafeteria meals for students in financial difficulty), social counseling, and emergency accommodation (at the beginning of the winter semester). We will also improve the processes for the permanent services and set up a digital system for the free meals.

We will also organize another lecture for students on the topic of taxes. An information event on compulsory military service and medical examinations is also planned.

In addition, we would like to create an offer that explains the basic options for financing studies, especially for international students.

Furthermore, a vaccination campaign will take place to make it easier for students to protect themselves against tick-borne encephalitis (TBE / FSME).

- Commitment to students' social and financial concerns
- Abolition of all tuition fees, better working conditions for student employees, better Bafög for all, and affordable housing
- Freitische (free cafeteria meals for students in financial difficulty)
- Digitization of our processes
- Social counseling
- Emergency accommodation
- Lecture on "Taxes for Students"
- Event on financing your studies
- tick-borne encephalitis (TBE / FSME) vaccination campaign

2.5 Equal opportunities

Discrimination and sexual violence have no place at KIT!

The student body at KIT is diverse, and we want to continue to promote this diversity. We are committed to true equality for all genders and are working to eliminate existing discrimination and disadvantages of any kind. We strongly oppose discrimination against students based on their social background, financial circumstances, class, actual or attributed origin, religion, or skin color.

We are actively committed to fighting fascism and all forms of group-focused enmity, and we also take a public stand on this issue. In doing so, we support organizations that aim to combat discrimination and fascism and contribute to the realization of social justice—for example, through our involvement in the Network Against the Right or Students Against the Right.

We fight against structural injustices at KIT, but we are aware that these have causes that extend beyond KIT to society as a whole. We support students who want to take action against these injustices. At the same time, we oppose discrimination that occurs specifically at KIT.

One example of this is gender-based discrimination that arises from binary gender concepts—such as the insistence on strictly gender-segregated toilets for “men” and “women.” We are therefore campaigning for the introduction of unisex toilets at KIT. Classic feminist struggles are also part of our remit. For example, people who menstruate should not be burdened by a lack of necessary hygiene products.

We work closely with the KIT Equal Opportunities Office. In addition to regularly exchanging information, we focus on joint projects such as the round table: Studying with Children and the Working Group on Sexualized Violence. We also want to intensify our cooperation with the representatives for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. In doing so, we address the specific needs of these students and try in particular to remove barriers to special regulations (keyword: disadvantage compensation) – even if these are only peripheral. We strive for an inclusive university that is barrier-free both on campus and in the digital realm.

We are actively involved in KIT committees, in particular the Senate Commission for Equal Opportunities and Diversity.

Mental health is a key issue that we want to continue to focus on. Together with the Round Table for Student Health, we are planning to publish a mental health compass that will provide students with a clear overview of support and counseling services.

We are committed to greater diversity in the structures of KIT and have the same expectations of our own committees. The diversity of the student body is not yet adequately reflected in the committees of the student union. We therefore want to achieve better representation of F(L)INTA, BIPOC, international, and queer students.

In the coming year, we also want to pay special attention to supporting first-generation academics. We want to examine the extent to which first-generation academics are structurally disadvantaged at KIT and how their situation can be improved.

The Equal Opportunities Office continues to serve as a central point of contact. There, students who have experienced discrimination or sexualized violence are advised, informed about their options for action, and supported.

- Clear rejection of discrimination, sexual violence, fascism, and all forms of group-focused enmity
- Commitment to combating discrimination against students based on their social background, gender, financial circumstances, class, actual or attributed origin, religion, or skin color
- Understanding structural injustices as a problem affecting society as a whole and supporting students who are committed to fighting them
- Introduction of unisex toilets
- Free provision of menstrual products
- Low-threshold counseling and support for students who have experienced discrimination or sexualized violence
- Strengthening mental health (e.g., Mental Health Compass)
- Targeted promotion of F(L)INTA, BIPOC, queer, international students, and first-generation academics in student structures

2.6 University groups

We offer university groups comprehensive structural and financial support within the scope of our capabilities so that they can carry out their diverse tasks.

Bureaucracy should never be an obstacle for university groups, which is why we are actively working to make the application process as quick and easy as possible. We will work to better communicate internal and external support services for university groups and have launched a new process for university groups to advertise events via the students@ mailing list. In addition to existing university groups, we also actively support the establishment of new groups and the reactivation of existing ones.

- Support with applications, new groups, and feedback
- Optimization of application processes
- Opportunities for advertising
- New working group for networking

2.7 International

International students usually don't have it easy. Whether it's language barriers, residency issues, questions about insurance, finding work, difficulties with bureaucracy, discrimination when looking for accommodation, for example, or problems with their studies (admission, starting their studies, organizing their studies, difficulties later on in their studies, changing subjects) or financing their studies.

That's why we offer comprehensive information on frequently asked questions and counseling for individual support. German language courses are also an important service for international students.

In order to provide the best possible support to our international students, we are in constant contact with the International Students Office (IStO). We want to give international students the opportunity to share their experiences and network with each other.

Together with KIT, we want to highlight the internationality and diversity of KIT. This starts with the International Day and other intercultural events that we offer. In order to further strengthen the presence of international students, we also encourage this target group to participate in university politics and become members of the various committees at KIT. In this context, we also want to establish a working group whose goals are explained in the annexes.

We also work in networks and alliances against tuition fees (networking with other universities in Baden-Württemberg; demonstrations, etc.) and would like to organize a number of intercultural events, e.g., International Day, exchanges, cooking evenings, game nights. If possible, we would also like to organize an international Christmas Eve celebration.

We are also planning workshops to empower international students on the following topics:

- Dealing with racism and discrimination
 - Integration (rights and obligations)
 - Getting ready for the job market in Germany
 - Networking workshops for international students
-
- Advice on various topics for international students
 - Close cooperation with the International Students Office
 - Making KIT's internationality and diversity visible
 - Encouraging international students to get involved in university politics
 - Campaigning against tuition fees
 - Organizing intercultural evenings and workshops for international students

2.8 External and Higher Education Policy

My area of responsibility lies in foreign policy and higher education policy for the student council. The aim of my work is to represent the interests of students both within the university and visibly, effectively, and sustainably to external actors. I understand foreign policy as the cultivation, expansion, and strategic use of contacts with other student representatives, civil society organizations, and higher education policy networks at the regional, national, and international levels.

In the area of higher education policy, I represent our student council, the AStA at KIT, and the student parliament at the state level, and communicate the positions of the LaStuVe to our student council. This includes addressing current developments in higher education policy, bringing student perspectives to internal university committees, and supporting parliamentary decision-making processes by providing expert input. My work aims to contribute to the transparency, networking, and political capacity of the student council.

At the international level, particular attention will be paid to European partner projects such as Eucor and university networks such as the ESN.

Tasks I will be responsible for during my term of office:

- Collaboration at the state level
- Welcoming external student representatives
- Promoting networking and supervising projects
- Attending dialogue events

2.9 Press and Public Relations

Communication and good public relations are key to reaching students. During this term of office, we want to continue to use our social media channels to provide information about the VS, as well as events on campus and university-related offers and topics.

In order to reach more students, monitors will also be installed in the cafeteria queue area to advertise the services offered by the VS (AStA, SSV, HSG, etc.). In cooperation with the StuWe, this will create a new channel of communication.

We also want to promote the external image of the AStA by ensuring a long-term presence on campus, e.g., through roll-ups and signage. In addition, we want to develop a uniform design. As part of this, old designs will be updated and new design templates created. We will also work on knowledge transfer.

- More social media and more active social media presence
- Monitors
- More visibility and external impact
- Review of knowledge transfer and templates

2.10 Unifest

Social interaction outside the lecture hall is a central part of student life. Encounters beyond the classroom enable networking across disciplines and semesters, strengthen the sense of community, and contribute significantly to a vibrant student culture at the university. Such spaces for informal exchange are particularly important in an increasingly busy everyday student life.

Large events such as the Unifest, which are organized by students for students, make an important contribution to this. Not only do they create a shared space for thousands of student visitors to enjoy, they also offer hundreds of volunteers the opportunity to take on responsibility, plan together, and implement a project of this magnitude. This promotes sustainable networking, teamwork, and identification with the student body.

A key feature of such student formats is their conscious focus on accessibility and participation. Student prices ensure that financial barriers remain low and that all students can participate regardless of their individual circumstances. In this way, student culture is not only made visible, but actively lived and experienced by a broad student body.

For precisely these reasons, we are committed to organizing another Unifest in 2026 through the UStA Kasse Karlsruhe e.V. In doing so, we are continuing a successful tradition and once again creating a space where student culture, volunteer work, and social cohesion come together in a special way.

- Social interaction outside the lecture hall strengthens networking, community spirit, and student culture.
- Large events such as the Unifest create a shared space for students to experience together
- Volunteering promotes responsibility, teamwork, and identification with the student body
- Student prices ensure accessibility and broad participation regardless of financial means
- The goal is to hold another Unifest in 2026 to strengthen student culture and cohesion

2.11 Culture

The Cultural Affairs Office is strongly committed to maintaining and expanding a diverse range of cultural activities on and around the KIT campus. A central focus of our work is supporting student groups, initiatives, and working groups in organizing and holding cultural events.

In particular, we advise on fundamental organizational issues, necessary applications, and communication with the relevant authorities, KIT departments, and other student cultural institutions.

In addition, we provide information about various funding opportunities for culture through the VS.

For the concrete implementation of events, we provide a constantly growing, comprehensive range of essential infrastructure with the VS rental pool, thereby specifically supplementing existing bottlenecks in student rental services.

In addition, the board supports students who are committed to long-term engagement by organizing and, in some cases, financing further training and external qualifications, e.g., qualification as a fire safety assistant or similar.

In addition, the Cultural Affairs Department is constantly striving to create opportunities for cooperation with cultural institutions. A major step in this direction is the agreement between VS and the Badisches Staatstheater for a contingent of free student tickets. The cooperation may also be extended to other areas; the aim here is to explore cooperation with other institutions in particular.

Furthermore, the Cultural Affairs Department is also involved in exchanges between cultural professionals. For example, meetings are offered to arrange dates and networking events within the cultural scene.

The board also continues to advocate for becoming a partner in the student cultural center at KIT (SKuZ) and supports cultural institutions affiliated with VS.

- Support in organizing cultural student events
- Managing the VS rental pool
- Further training and qualifications for organizing events
- Cooperation with the Badisches Staatstheater and other cultural institutions
- Promoting exchange between cultural professionals
- Becoming a shareholder in SKuZ

2.12 IT

The IT department coordinates the admin team and works with them to maintain the VS's IT infrastructure. Their tasks are therefore to provide something on demand when it is needed or to repair something when it breaks. The biggest projects this year are:

- Redesigning the mail infrastructure and adding new features (shared mailboxes and improved mail flow, where emails only arrive once at the recipients)
- Migrating the computers to the new Debian version
- Renewing permissions (more sensible and simpler distribution of who has access where)
- Adapting workflows so that in the future there will only be the admin team and no IT department
- Expanding the AStA cloud functionalities
- Creating an overview of the existing IT infrastructure

2.13 Social-Ecological Transformation

We understand sustainability as a holistic concept that encompasses ecological, social, cultural, and economic dimensions. Our goal is to promote a culture of sustainability at KIT that is reflected in all areas of university life—from social interaction on campus to infrastructure, mobility, and nutrition to teaching, research, and exchange with society. Sustainability should be something that students can experience in their everyday lives.

A particular focus of our work is on collaborative work and networking existing initiatives. Through exchange, cooperation, and joint projects, we want to strengthen a collective understanding of sustainable action on campus and motivate students—especially young talent—to actively participate in shaping it. Supporting student university groups and working groups forms the central basis for this.

We continue to support the AK Fahrradcampus (Bicycle Campus Working Group) in organizing the bicycle repair workshop, coordinating workshop supervisors, and maintaining bicycle repair stations. Formats such as FLINTA* screwdriving contribute to low-threshold access. The Fairteilen working group is supported in operating the Fairteiler as a project against food waste; in addition, a regular “Kitchen for All” with rescued food is to be established. With the Campusgarten working group, we promote community gardening as a place for knowledge transfer, recreation, and encounter, and we advocate for more garden areas and raised beds as part of campus design. We see the RepairCafé as a space for mutual help and for a more conscious use of resources. The Sustainable Transformation working group offers an open framework for exchange and a low-threshold entry point for project-based work on sustainability issues in the context of university policy.

To strengthen the networking of sustainable initiatives, we are planning internal workshops and joint event planning. The goal is to offer regular, student-led events on sustainability topics, including a sustainability slonz in the summer semester and a Green O-Phase in the winter semester.

Another focus of ours is sustainable mobility. We are committed to climate-friendly mobility solutions on campus and in everyday student life – currently in particular through exchanges with the city of Karlsruhe and the KVV, as well as surveys of the student body, to develop a new bike-sharing system and renegotiate the semester ticket regulations. On campus, we advocate for the promotion of active mobility and a reduction in car traffic, and are submitting concrete proposals for this as part of the bicycle lane planning on Engesserstraße. The completion and launch of the cargo bike rental service will be prioritized in the coming year.

We see nutrition as an important lever for sustainable everyday decisions. We are seeking dialogue with the student union and the cafeteria in order to further develop an affordable, climate-friendly food offering that is accessible to all students, with particular consideration given to food intolerances.

In addition, we are committed to creating a livable, green campus that promotes biodiversity. We work closely with the KIT Sustainability Office and bring student perspectives to the university's sustainability processes. In collaboration with the House of Competence, we are supporting the development of the new minor in sustainable development and are committed to strengthening education for sustainable development throughout the curriculum. As part of the implementation of the basic sustainability project and KIT's goal of climate neutrality by 2030, we actively represent

student interests in KIT committees, in particular in the Sustainability Forum, the Sustainability Steering Committee, and the Karlsruhe Climate Pact.

- Promoting a culture of sustainability in all areas of campus life
- Networking and supporting student sustainability initiatives
- Planning regular student events on sustainability (KüfA, Sustainability Schlonz, Green O-Phase)
- Commitment to sustainable mobility (bike rental system, semester ticket, car-free campus, cargo bike rental)
- Commitment to affordable, climate-friendly, and inclusive cafeteria offerings
- Promotion of green, biodiversity-friendly campus design
- Promotion of ESD in teaching
- Representation of student interests in the Sustainability Forum, Sustainability Steering Committee, and Karlsruhe Climate Pact