

# keep in touch

Alumni



„Weltweite Probleme sind nur in weltweiten Netzwerken lösbar.“

Interview mit Alumnus Prof. Dr. Joybrato Mukherjee,  
neuer Präsident des DAAD

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**Die RWTH und die Corona-Pandemie**  
Forschung und Entwicklungen  
gegen das Virus

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**Zum Hochschuljubiläum**  
Wissenschaftliche Ideen vor die Kamera  
getragen

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**Wissenschaft & Wirtschaft**  
100 Jahre Flugwissenschaftliche  
Vereinigung Aachen (FVA)

# A Shared Human Experience

## Video Conference with International RWTH Alumni Leaders

**T**he Coronavirus Pandemic As a Challenge and Chance for Alumni Networking – Experience and Ideas". This was the topic of a Zoom meeting in September. Professor Bernd Markert, Chair of the Institute of General Mechanics and Rector's Delegate for Alumni, invited 13 international alumni leaders – current representatives, presidents, chairs, and contacts of different international RWTH Alumni groups – from twelve countries worldwide, ranging all the way from East Asia to Europe and to the Americas.

Since March this year, many alumni events have had to be cancelled – including Alumni Day at Campus Melaten, which was planned as an occasion for alumni to honor RWTH's 150th anniversary. After the summer break, Professor Markert and the Alumni Team took the chance to get in touch with alumni leaders around the world via video platform to hear about their personal situation as well as the general situation in their respective countries, and, of course, the local alumni groups. The alumni talked about their experiences for nearly two hours and shared many similar stories: lockdowns, working from home, remote teaching – and, finally, missing real-life, face-to-face meetings. Here are some of the significant statements from the video conference:

**Rana Ilgaz, Head of Profession Highways and Traffic, Transport for London, UK:**

"Private and public life is heavily restricted, nearly everything must be done from home. Currently, 15,000 of my colleagues are working from home. This meeting is a wonderful opportunity to bring people closer; it should be done more regularly in future."

**Dr. Josef Kim, Representative of RWTH Aachen University, Republic of Korea:**

"The pandemic is affecting alumni life. Our meetings had to be cancelled. The pandemic makes everything feel like a prison and I hope that we will overcome it soon."

**Sjarif Hidajat, Jakarta, Indonesia, Contact for RWTH Alumni Group in Indonesia:**

"We are not allowed to travel outside Indonesia. Schools and universities are closed and the Internet connection in rural areas is still bad. We wish that we could have a small alumni meeting in Indonesia with guests from RWTH."

**DU Shengyong, General Secretary of Chinese RWTH Alumni Club, Beijing, China:**

"There was a strict lockdown at Chinese New Year. I'm very grateful that RWTH and Prof. Rüdiger supported Chinese students at that time. Our Alumni activities also moved to a remote format e. g. for DCHAN Engineering – a project funded by the BMBF (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) and organized by Fraunhofer Institute for Laser Technology ILT, we held several webinars with professors from RWTH and Tsinghua University."

**Prof. Dr. Anupam Saxena, IIT Kanpur, India:**

"Lockdown came in March and students had to go to their residences. A lot of teaching and studying is remote. I'm very grateful to get something like a collective human view in this remote meeting."

**Dr.-Ing. Piyada Suwanpinij, lecturer at Thai-German Graduate School of Engineering (TGGS, affiliated to RWTH) in Bangkok, Thailand:**

"I'm teaching entirely remotely from my office. We have very strict regulations because everyone is scared of COVID-19, e. g. quarantine in just a single room which people can't leave for 14 days."

**Rana Ilgaz**

**Dr.-Ing. Piyada Suwanpinij**

**Guy Lux**

Audio ein  Video abbrechen 

**Alexandros Mavvidis, Mavvidis+Partners, Thessaloniki, Greece:**

"There is a large number of alumni in Greece, meanwhile we have more contact with younger alumni. Some plans for new activities unfortunately had to be postponed because of the coronavirus and we hope to be able to recommence next year."

**Yavuz Murtezaoglu, Aachen/Istanbul, Chair of ATAB (Aachen Türkei Akademiker Bund):**

"Our alumni club has members from Aachen and Istanbul. Generally there is a large number of RWTH alumni in Turkey, but the coronavirus is also preventing us from strengthening our alumni network."



[Guy Lux, President of the RWTH Alumni Club Al Oochener, Luxemburg:](#)

“Many people in Luxemburg commute to work in Belgium, the Netherlands, or Germany. They were in for an interesting new experience: at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, they had many problems because the neighboring countries closed their borders for some weeks. But now they’re open again.”

[Prof. Dr. Anna Luiza Marques Ayres da Silva, mining engineer and professor at University of Sao Paulo, Brasil:](#)

“Since March I’ve been teaching remotely from home. RWTH alumni is a small group, but we had some very enriching meetings in the last years, initiated by Prof. Vorländer, RWTH Rector’s Delegate for Brazil. There is great potential for an increasing number of alumni.”

[Dr. Sebastián Fingerhuth, lecturer at Valparaiso University, Chile:](#)

“My university already switched to remote learning last October because of massive student protests. Many students haven’t even gotten to know their university.”

[Dr. Hermann Victor Johnen, lecturer at the Institute of European Studies, University of Berkeley, US:](#)

“We organized several alumni meetings in the past. I’m currently in Germany – fortunately, because of the fire catastrophe in California. There is also a very serious situation there concerning coronavirus because of the high number of cases.”

[Dr. Gerd Schroth, Chair of RWTH Alumni Club North America, Atlanta, USA:](#)

“We also have a high number of coronavirus cases, but most people are very

disciplined. Working from home is much better in many cases. I would like to continue this meeting format, also as one-on-one communication.”

“We’re very glad that everyone is fine. Everyone is facing the same problems in the coronavirus crisis – some more and others less. People are longing to get back to normal life, back in lecture halls,” Professor Markert summed up.

Of course, the coronavirus pandemic is also affecting alumni activities all around the world. Many events and get-togethers had to be cancelled. All alumni leaders appreciated the video platforms to keep in touch in this way. Now more regular remote offers for alumni on specific topics are currently being planned.

► Dietrich Hunold

# Alumni-Service & Projekte

## Registrierung

Sind Sie als Alumna/Alumnus bereits in unserem Netzwerk registriert? Falls nicht, so registrieren Sie sich kostenlos online unter [www.rwth-aachen.de/alumni-portal](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/alumni-portal)

## Information & Kommunikation

- Alumni-Magazin „keep in touch“; zweimal jährlich als Printversion sowie digital als PDF-Dokument.
- E-Mail-Newsletter mit aktuellen Informationen und Wissenswertes von Aachen und der Hochschule.
- Alumni-Treffen im In- und Ausland.

- Kontakte zu Kommilitonen sowie Ansprechpartnern aus Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft
- Social Media.



RWTH Aachen University



RWTH Aachen University Alumni

## Benefits

- „life long“ E-Mail-Adresse.
- Weiterbildungsangebote der RWTH International Academy und Aachen Entrepreneurship Gründerzentrum.

## Projekt „Forscher-Alumni“

Mit besonderen Maßnahmen und der Einbindung in unsere Netzwerkaktivitäten möchten wir internationale Gastwissenschaftler als Botschafter der RWTH und Multiplikatoren gewinnen.

Ausführliche Informationen:



[www.rwth-aachen.de/alumni](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/alumni)

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„Frohe Festtage –  
und bleiben Sie gesund!“

“Season’s Greetings –  
and stay healthy!”

