

ENGLISH VERSION



P R E S S R E L E A S E

of the AStA (General Students' Committee) of the University of Potsdam

Dear students,

we are the new AStA (General Students' Committee) of the University of Potsdam. Perhaps you have met us at the WarmUp this year, read one of our monthly newsletters or visited our office on the campus Neues Palais with a specific question.

You don't have any idea what the AStA is...?

The AStA represents and defends the concerns and interests of students; we try to make them visible, particularly towards the administration, but also in public. Moreover we support you with a number of useful free services, e.g. consultations concerning your BAföG, your public transportation ticket or if you have trouble with professors. Furthermore we support many interesting events and student projects.

If you want to find out more about the AStA, what we offer and what our opening hours are, take a look at our website: www.astaup.de

...Who we are and what we want...

This year the AStA consist of 11 departments, or 15 students respectively, who all focus on different topics and have set specific goals for their upcoming work.

We have had some time to find ourselves as a committee and now we are beginning our work with many plans and ideas, which we tried to summarize for you as following:

Lennard Gottmann (department for campus life & -politic; campuspolitik@astaup.de):

„During my time in the General students' committee I want to be a contact person for students who are experiencing difficulties with exams and exam regulations, professors and teachers or other members of the university board. I will also work for a stronger representation of the General students' committee and the student counsels on campus and in the students' daily life.

Lastly, I am responsible for and act as a contact person for the negotiations regarding the 51€-lawsuit.“

Fathia Mohamed (department for anti-racism; antira@astaup.de):

„Living on campus without racism is impossible. But together we can actively act against it. It's not just the problem of a few, it is a matter concerning EVERYONE. As an antiracism activist I am a contact person for affected people. I want to empower and make changes together with You. The problems must be made public, so people can inform themselves and become more aware.“

Laura Ranglack (department for the KuZe, kulturzentrum@astaup.de):

„The fact that a self-organized location like KuZe exists in the commercialized city centre of Potsdam is almost a miracle. It's amazing how the volunteers and culture lovers are opposing the dry and often expensive cultural scene of Potsdam by getting involved in running this open space and supporting cultural projects with their skills and labour.

But besides miracles and amazement, in reality we are facing serious threats of privatisation and displacement. In order to keep this wonderful space, we have to make the KuZe visible as an important pillar of cultural life in Potsdam and make an effort together to preserve this political, creative and human location.“ [WITHOUT YOU KUZE IS NO FUN]

Anja Roefe (department for press & media presse@astaup.de):

„Imagine a university, where students are involved in the decision-making process, where they would have a greater right of co-determination and self-governed (public) spaces are not longer wishful thinking (e.g. Neues Palais). Sounds good, doesn't it? - My suggestion: Let's create the university we want; a self-governed space for students at the campus Neues Palais could be a long overdue, but good start.“

Willi Stieger (department for social issues; SoPo@astaup.de):

„For the year that I will be holding the office, above all I will do my best to achieve sociopolitical improvements in university life for you. My main topics are accessibility to all public buildings for everyone and student accomodation in Potsdam. I demand extensive accessibility at all German universities, as this can be the only move in the right direction. As for student accomodation, my position is clear as well: housing needs to be affordable, which is a question of educational justice. More affordable housing in Potsdam is in high demand. Actions based on realpolitik and putting pressure on responsible institutions are required. I strongly believe that the AStA is the perfect place to realize such objectives.“

Ella Schilling, Michał Łuszczynski (department for culture & events; kultur@astaup.de):

„Modern cultures are closely related and interwoven, they are alterable and dynamic! Cultural activities not only offer possibilities for social and cultural diversity but also connect each other. We want to seize this opportunity and turn our university into a place from and for persons engaged in the cultural sector. The General Students' Committee supports your cultural and artistic initiatives and projects. Furthermore we want to reflate events like ‚Purple Over Night‘ and the summer festival. Any help and commitment is extremely welcome!“

Lisa-M. Maliga (environmental department oeko@astaup.de):

„Throwing food away. Buying things you only need once. Throwing stuff away. All that is not cool and pretty annoying - where's the sustainability? I mainly want to deal with these questions: How can we use our belongings effectively? Redistribution, fair sharing - which options do we have already? Which ones can we expand? Which ones should we establish?“

Till Scholta (financial department; finanzen@astaup.de):

„The financial department of the AStA manages the funds of the student body. I want to accomplish this task this year with responsibility, so we can continue to support student projects in areas of culture, sports and_or political education.“

Jennifer Wiczorek, Kay Roth (department for antifascism; antifa@astaup.de):

„Fascists at the university? - Yes, especially the new right sees and places itself directly among us. For example the AfD in the parliamants and at the new years celebration or the young so-called ‚Identitären‘ who are mostly students. We want to oppose the swing to the right and support all students in their antifascist fights. If you have ideas or need help, you can contact us. Solidarity is a weapon!“

Dulguun Shirchinbal, Nino Todua (department for international students;
internationales@astaup.de):

„The international department of AStA is your contact point on all matters related to studying and staying in Germany. We would like to hear about your experiences and problems at the University of Potsdam! We are here to make the matters of international students visible and get them heard by the university board. Feel free to come to our office and use the wide range of consulting services. We firmly believe that there are still many ways to improve studyability and everyday university life for international students - for example, by providing better support and service in the form of preparation courses, contact points on all campuses and an active network of international students.“

Marie Behrendt, Emilie Grütte (department for gender politics; GePo@astaup.de):

„Traditionally, the AStA department for gender politics campaigns against sexual harassment as well as against gender and body specific prejudices and discrimination in everyday life, on campus, in seminars and in the work place. People affected by these inequalities are mainly - although not exclusively - women, lesbians and other people, who challenge male and heterosexual norms. Emilie and Marie vouch for this tradition and, additionally, want to place feminist topics right into the heart of the uni: in teaching. Currently, they are looking for professors, who want to cooperate with the AStA in organising a lecture series about the history, politics and ethics of pregnancy termination.“

If you have any questions, or if you want to support a project, just write a mail to the specific person :)

All the best,
your AStA

Potsdam, the 3rd of January, 2018