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Implementation and Improvement of Ombudspersons and Their Work: Dos and Don'ts

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Implementation of ombuds system

Why?

For whom?

How?

What should be avoided?

Implementation of Ombudssystem

Why?

Concrete Case

Need of consultation in conflict situations

- **Prevention of misconduct**





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DFG

Memorandum: Proposals for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice

Revised version July 2013

**To be applied by all German universities
and research institutions**

www.dfg.de



WILEY-VCH

DFG

Implementation of Ombudssystem

Why?

Case

Need of consultation in conflict situation

- Prevention of misconduct
- Comprehension of necessity
- Quality management and quality protection



Implementation of Ombudssystem

For whom?

Scope of application

All members of the institution in question

Need of basic conditions

- **Visibility**
- **Reachability**





Implementation of Ombudssystem

For whom?

Scope of application

All members of the institution in question

Need of basic conditions

- **Visibility**
- **Reachability and availability**
- **Confidentiality**



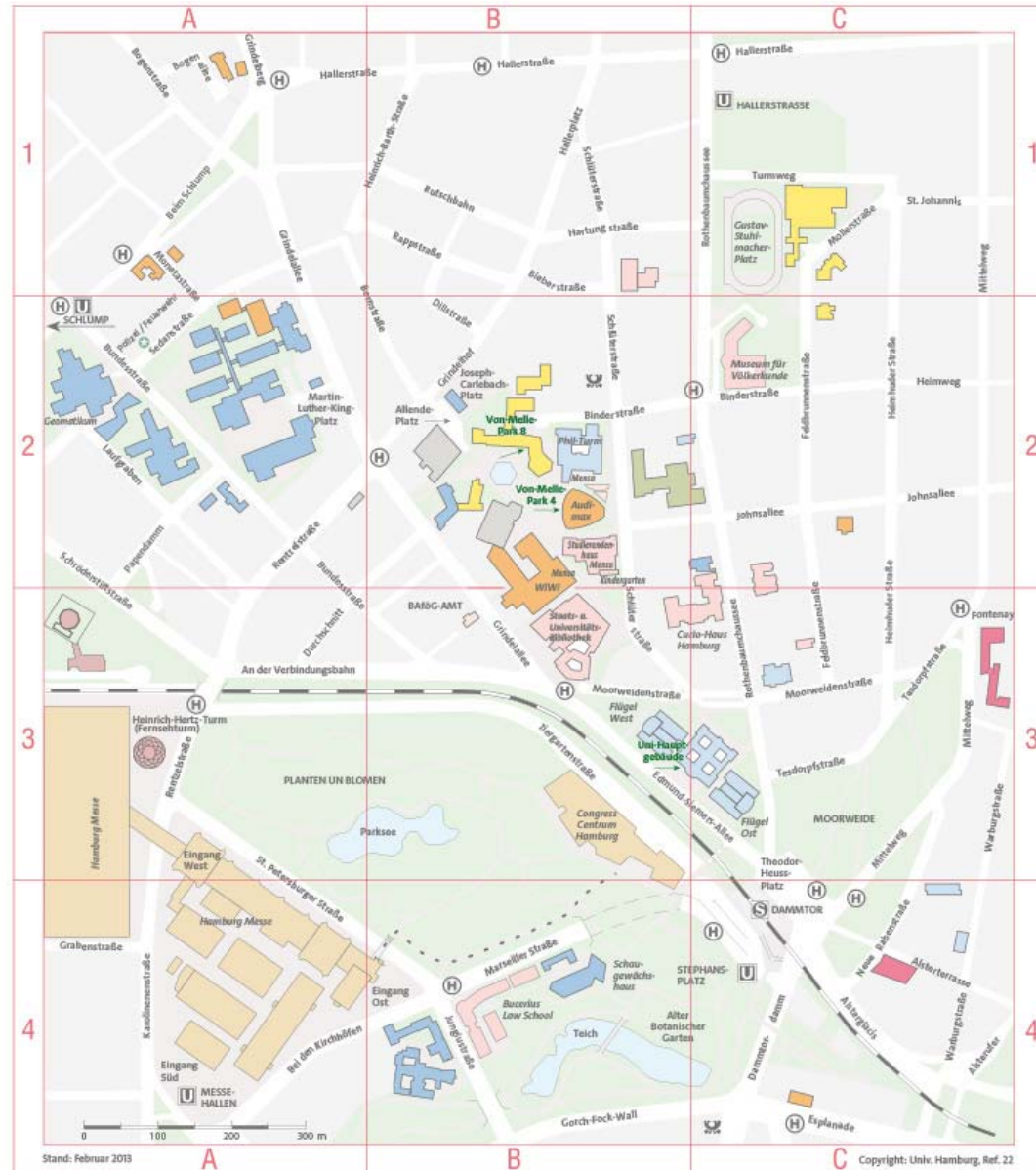
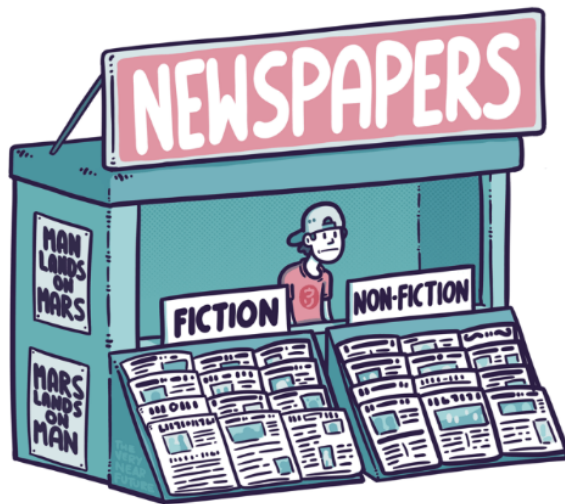
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Ombuds office should be placed in „hidden“ environment; as far away as possible from

- Head of Institution
- Steering Committee
- Deanary ...

Rumours and smattering inhibit suitable conflict solutions



Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Structure

Framework conditions

Appropriate resources

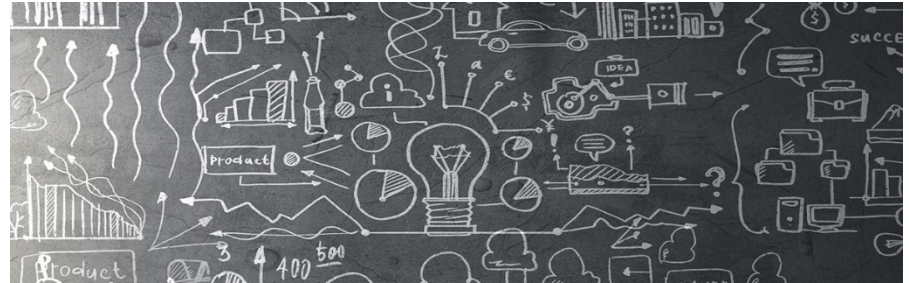
Unrestricted independence

Freedom from subordination

Guidelines, Rules, Bylaws

Unequivocal descriptions and definitions:

- Number of ombudspersons, deputy regulations
- Scope of action and decision-making



Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Structure

Appreciative environment

Positive and supportive attitude

→ Head of institution, colleagues ...

Practical implementation

Office space and working material

Reasonable equipment and facilities

Practical assistance



Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Person

**MEET THE
OMBUDDY!**

Clear criteria for appointment / election

Basic qualifications and requirements

(beyond personal authority, integrity, research experience)

Knowledge of GSP-rules (local, (inter)national)

**Competences in consultation, conflict solving
and mediation**

Interdisciplinary perspective

„Soft“ skills, such as openness, empathy

Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Person

**MEET THE
OMBUDDY!**

Ombudsperson is seen as

confessor, pacifier;

arbitrator, judge;

loyal colleague, representative of the institution

In fact he / she is a researcher, could be

→ competitor, rival

→ co-worker, friend

Impact on impartiality and trustworthiness



Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Person

**MEET THE
OMBUDDY!**

Further training

Mediation, Conflict management etc.

Reasonable Compensation

Reduction of teaching load

Relief of other duties, administration

Money (?)

Employed ombudsperson?

Implementation of Ombudssystem

How?

Person

**MEET THE
OMBUDDY!**

Professional counselling and networking

Exchange of experiences

Learning from own mistakes

Support of other ombudspersons

→ Regular meetings

- Strain relief
- Strengthening
- Increase in professionalism



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**Thank you for
your attention**