
New ideas on the topic of sustainability from students and researchers. Former astronaut Thomas Reiter (below) filled young people with "enthusiasm for the unknown."

# Studying the world of tomorrow

Students, teachers, and researchers discuss sustainability at **Our Common Future,** organized by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

When Tilman, a sophomore, talks about the "Picycle," he sounds less like a high-school student than like a young scientist. He casually explains the interplay between sensor nodes and vibration harvesters and how they measure speed and temperature as if it were a matter of course. The Picycle is a solar-powered measurement system for bicycles, and Tilman and his fellow classmates at Wilhelm Ostwald High School in Leipzig built it themselves. A Raspberry Pi provides the computing power, hence the name Picycle.

The Leipzig team is one of 19 project teams to attend the first Our Common Future youth conference in Bremerhaven in early May. At the event, 140 students, teachers, and researchers from all over Germany presented their research projects, which are supported by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

The goals are to get young people excited about science and sustainability research, and to help students and researchers network via real research projects without a traditional teaching approach. The Picycle was built in cooperation with the Leipzig University of Applied Sciences. The researchers took their current research project involving trams and applied it to bicycles with the help of the students.

## Making sustainability accessible

Knowledge of the complex topic of sustainability is indispensable to shaping the world of tomorrow. In focusing on "sustainable living spaces," the Foundation supports both cutting-edge research, and students whose projects demonstrate what each individual is capable of contributing. Energy is only one of many subjects covered by the topic. The students explore how fashion could become more sustainable, how pharmaceutical waste could be removed from water, and whether pseudoscorpions could be used to combat varroa mites, which wreak havoc on honeybee colonies.

## Cutting-edge research up close

Apart from discussing their projects, the young people at the conference were also given some unique insights into the world of science. They talked over the telephone with the Arctic research base AWIPEV on Spitsbergen, they explored the "Polarstern," a research vessel, and they visited the climate house in Bremerhaven.

Thomas Reiter, a former astronaut, showed the young people just how far science can take us. "It's never too soon to start getting young people excited about the subject," he said. He made quite an impression on his young audience by telling them about his work and research in space.

And just as Reiter encouraged the students, so they in turn are encouraging those around them. "When the newspaper wrote about us, lots of classmates took notice and asked how it works," says Picycle team member Antonella proudly. In the new school year, the project will be passed on to the next class. *mk*

**Case in point: The Picycle makes sustainable use of energy.**

Photos: Rupert Warren

## Bosch Alumni Network founded

Since its founding in 1964, the Robert Bosch Foundation has supported numerous people and promoted their ideas in Germany and around the world. Now the Foundation has established the **Bosch Alumni Network**, with the aim of maintaining long-term contact between alumni, facilitating networking, and fostering the development of new ideas for cooperation. The network is supervised by the International Alumni Center (IAC) in Berlin, which the Foundation established for that purpose. In addition to the Bosch Alumni Network, the IAC will also support other foundations and charitable organizations as a partner in alumni work. The goal is to bring together agents of change from different sectors worldwide.

You can find more information at **www.boschalumni.net**.

## Where the Foundation spends its money

In 2016, the Robert Bosch Foundation was able to provide its institutions and projects with around €109 million in funding. The money was used to support the Robert Bosch Hospital in Stuttgart, the German School Academy, the international Robert Bosch United World College in Freiburg, and many more. **Several third-party projects and initiatives that meshed well with the Foundation's areas of emphasis received a total of approximately €62 million in funding.** The chart below shows how project funding was distributed among the Foundation's various funding categories.

Project funding